Handbook of

Christian Symbolism.

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HANDBOOK

OF

CHRISTIAN SYMBOLISM.

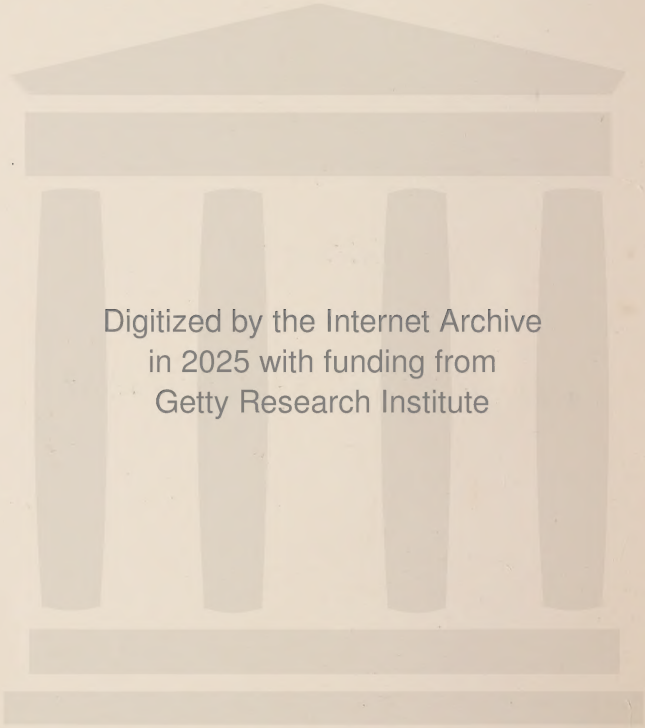

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PLATE 1.

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HANDBOOK

OF

CHRISTIAN SYMBOLISM.

BY

W. & G. AUDSLEY,

ARCHITECTS,

Authors of Several Works on Art.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS IN CHROMO-LITHOGRAPHY AND WOOD-ENGRAVING.

LONDON:

DAY & SON, LIMITED,

GATE STREET, LINCOLN'S-INN FIELDS.

THE GETTY CENTER

TO

HENRY DUCKWORTH, ESQ.

OF LIVERPOOL,

A PATRON AND LOVER OF CHRISTIAN ART,

THIS WORK IS DEDICATED,

WITH EVERY FEELING OF ESTEEM AND APPRECIATION,

BY

HIS OBEDIENT SERVANTS,

THE AUTHORS.

PREFACE.

IN writing and publishing this little Handbook we have been actuated by a desire to supply, in some slight degree, a want which has been much felt by the students of Christian art.

We trust that it will be understood, however, that we have not had any idea of rivalling the many learned works on the subject which have been published both in this country and in France, from which we have received much valued information, and to which we must refer those who wish to go deeply into the study of Christian Symbolism.

Our little Work is before us, and we are not blind to its many imperfections and shortcomings, the latter

being partly due to the necessarily condensed nature of the work. In the hope that the will may be accepted for the deed, we recommend our Handbook to the kind leniency of its readers.

It has been written with a desire to aid the great movement which is now being made in all branches of Christian art; and if it assists that revival only in a small degree, our labours, begun in love, will be crowned with what will appear to us the greatest success.

W. & G. A.

LIVERPOOL,
Feast of St. James, 1865.

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INTRODUCTION.

IT is somewhat surprising at the present day—one so enlightened and learned on most branches of art, one which hourly witnesses such strivings after knowledge—that so little is known of the interesting subject of Christian Symbolism. We observe, however, that there is gradually springing up a wish to learn something regarding this great handmaid of early Christian Art; and we trust the wish will be encouraged and promoted by all those who may find it in their power to add to the information already collected.

We feel confident that the subject only requires to be known to be fully appreciated; and, aided by the revival of Ecclesiastical Architecture and its attendant arts, with

which it has ever been connected, it may again receive the favour it experienced through a period of more than a thousand years.

The revived arts of stained glass and church decoration, now liberally supported, have done much, and will yet do more, to popularize Christian Symbolism, and obtain for it consideration and respect.

A knowledge of Symbolism is highly requisite for those who study the works of Christian Art; for there is scarcely a picture handed down to us from the Middle Ages, containing sacred figures, that symbols are not in some way introduced; and, as a rule, these symbols exercise no mean influence on the composition. Such being the case, it must be obvious that it becomes a matter of great difficulty to interpret the meaning or intention of the artist without a knowledge of the characters of the language in which he has expressed his ideas. When only a single figure is represented, the difficulty of discovering for whom the artist has intended it is much increased; for it generally happens that no further information is vouchsafed beyond that supplied by some peculiar symbol, emblem, or attribute, which, to the initiated, is as plain as a written description would be, and, indeed, often more expressive and to the point.

The same knowledge of Christian Symbolism is requisite for those who study ancient illuminations, sculpture, stained glass, and other decorative arts; and, above all, it is absolutely necessary for the architect and student of Mediæval Architecture to have a thorough acquaintance with the art which guided its early masters in their labours of love.

The practical student of the art of illuminating will find a knowledge of Symbolism the greatest assistance to him in his works, for it will enable him to introduce into his designs, if they be of a sacred character, that which will tend to illustrate his subject and give force to its meaning. We may here remark that a studied use must be made of symbols; that it is at all times better to introduce one with propriety than half a dozen for the sake of ornament.

To the practical artist in all branches of church or ecclesiastical decoration an acquaintance with Christian Symbolism is of all importance. Were more attention paid to it, we should see an improvement in our stained glass windows, the illuminated or painted decorations, and the furniture of our churches; and, we may say (as a hint to our architectural brethren), in their arrangement and architectural features.

But we believe all this will be remedied in time: a few careful and diligent labourers are required in the field; doubtless they are but waiting for the morn to break, and the clouds of ignorance and bigotry to roll away, to commence their labours and carry them on with cheerfulness.

CHAPTER I.

The Nimbus, Aureole, and Glory.

A CONSIDERABLE amount of confusion exists in the minds of many concerning the proper meaning and application of the Nimbus, and its extended and compound forms, the Aureole and Glory.

Such being the case, we shall endeavour, in the present chapter, to explain carefully and clearly all matters in connexion with these three grand attributes which have been universally adopted by the early Christian artists, throughout all departments of their works, to represent or express divinity or deification more or less perfect.

Neither the nimbus nor the aureole can properly be termed symbols, for they express nothing when used

alone. They are in every case attributes, whether used in connexion with figures or portraitures, or applied to symbols to signify the divinity of the personage set forth. Yet a knowledge of the powers and signification of the various nimbi used in art is absolutely necessary for every one who desires to become conversant with Christian symbolism; for without it, numerous mistakes are sure to be made in the study of ancient art-works or in the production of modern.

We do not overrate the importance of the nimbus in Christian art, for we find it universally used by artists of all countries, in painting, sculpture, and stained glass, as a peculiar seal or proof of holiness. As a crown denotes a sovereign or titled head, so does the nimbus distinguish a divinity or holy person by its presence. As a herald can tell the rank of him who wears a crown by the shape and arrangement of the diadem, so can the archæologist tell the elevation or divine degree of the personage invested with a nimbus by its shape and ornamentation.

Like the crown, the nimbus encircles the head, although in a different manner. The crown lies horizontally, while the nimbus is placed like a disc or plate behind the head. This is the rule observed in the application of the attribute up to about the fifteenth century; during the

following two centuries a simple unadorned circlet or ring takes the place of the disc, and is represented as hovering over the head. In and after the seventeenth century the nimbus disappears altogether.

We have spoken of the nimbus as if applied to the head only, but we shall show hereafter that it was not exclusively confined to that member; although never do we observe it applied to another part of the body when the whole figure is depicted.

When or where the nimbus was first introduced in art is quite uncertain; but beyond doubt it has had its origin in remote antiquity. As regards the probable origin of the attribute, we cannot do better than quote Mr. Gilbert French's remarks on the subject in his interesting and valuable paper on the nimbus.* "The sun is of all natural objects that which uneducated humanity has in every age, and in almost all climes, looked upon with the greatest awe and reverence. Before the glorious rays of its light and heat—the apparent material source of life and vegetation—men willingly bent themselves in adoration; and even when reason and education had somewhat influenced them with a knowledge of a spiritual power, by which the sun itself was created and controlled, many

* "Notes on the Nimbus," by G. J. French. Printed for presentation.

nations retained that luminary as the visible sign or emblem of the unseen God, to whom, through it, they continued to offer sacrifice and worship.

"Rays of fire or of light thus naturally became emblems of divine power; the statues of pagan deities were clothed or armed with fiery emanations; Jupiter bore the lightning, Apollo was crowned with sunbeams, and Diana wore the crescent moon as a diadem; while numerous persons of both sexes are fabled to have been translated to the sky, there to sparkle for ever as starry constellations. Eastern paganism invests its idols, even to the present day, with similar attributes. The heads of gods of Japan and Burmah are surrounded by rays corresponding with those of the classical Apollo. The crowns worn by ancient Eastern potentates were but materialized glories — the divine emanations copied in burnished gold.

"The Jews and Moslems, though they do not *represent* their prophets and lawgivers with the nimbus, always attribute to them this distinguishing ornament. . . . . The Chinese represent not only their deities, but also their great lawgiver and philosopher Confucius, with nimbi similar to those on Christian saints and martyrs."

The Christians, deriving their first ideas from pagan art, adopted the nimbus at a very early period. We are led to believe that examples of this attribute have been found in the catacombs of Rome, dating as far back as the fourth century. From that time until the seventeenth century the nimbus was used in all branches of Christian art.

The Nimbus of God.

THE three Persons of the Godhead are individualized in art by nimbi differing from those which distinguish all other personages, viz., archangels, angels, evangelists, apostles, saints, martyrs, and living men of recognized sanctity.

The nimbus of God the Father, whether applied to portraitures or symbols, is usually a circular disc, having three bars or rays upon its field issuing from its centre and extending to its circumference.

These rays vary considerably in size in different examples; sometimes they are simple unornamented

lines (Fig. 1, Plate II.), while at others they are so broad as to occupy a half or third of the whole surface. In the latter case they are richly decorated with ornamental designs or precious stones.

The Greek artists usually inscribed the nimbus of the Deity with three letters, omicron (O), omega (Ω), and nu (N), which, united thus O ΩN, signify "I am," or the Being (Fig. 2). As regards the position of the three letters on the nimbus (which is not the same on ancient examples), we have the following directions in the "Guide de la Peinture," a Greek MS. purchased at Mount Athos by M. Didron, and translated by M. P. Durand:* "On the cross intersecting the crown (nimbus) of each of the three persons of the Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, let the following letters be inscribed, ὁ ὤν, for it is by these words that God was pleased to reveal himself to Moses in the burning bush; 'ἐγὼ εἰμὶ ὁ ὤν,' 'I am that I am.' Let the letters be thus arranged: place the omicron (ο) on the right hand branch of the nimbus, the omega (ω) on the upper part, and the nu (ν) on the left."

The Latins, imitating this idea, sometimes inscribed

* Didron's "Christian Iconography," vol. i. p. 45.

PLATE II.

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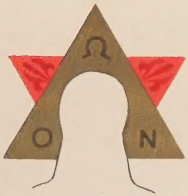

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the nimbus of God with the word "REX," placing a letter on each ray, as in the Greek examples.

There are several other forms which the nimbus of God the Father assumes, although none of them are so commonly met with as the rayed disc.

In late Italian and Greek art we find the nimbus in the form of an equilateral triangle, and sometimes formed of two triangles, one placed the reverse way behind the other. On the front triangle the omicron, omega, and nu are usually inscribed. In some examples a circle of divergent rays surrounds the triangular nimbus.

At times, although very rarely, we find a lozenge-shaped nimbus either with concave or straight sides. It is difficult to understand how or why this shape came to be applied to portraitures of the Father; the reason for the adoption of the three-rayed disc and the triangle is obvious, both being symbols of the Trinity, and indicative of Its presence.

The nimbus of God the Son is generally a circular disc with the three rays upon its field, in every way similar to that of God the Father.

In the earliest ages of the Church, however, our Saviour is repeatedly represented with a plain circular

nimbus, and His symbol, the Lamb, with a nimbus devoid of rays, but having a monogram of His name inscribed on it, accompanied with the alpha (A) and omega (Ω).

During the middle ages Christ was never intentionally depicted with a plain nimbus: the few examples which do exist are clearly mistakes. We are not aware that there are any examples showing our Saviour invested either with a triangular or lozenge-shaped nimbus. In Greek art the omicron, omega, and nu are inscribed on the rays of the nimbus of God the Son in the same manner as on that of the Father.

It is the general opinion of writers on Christian iconography and symbolism that the three rays or bars on the nimbus of the Deity are a portion of a Greek cross, and the remaining portion, or lower limb, is hidden by the head, and they have joined one another in terming the divine attribute a "cruciform nimbus."

We were satisfied with their conclusion, and accepted it without particularly questioning its propriety, until Mr. G. J. French brought the subject before us. Since then, having studied the subject, we have become firmly convinced that his opinion is the right one, viz., that the bars on the nimbus have no connexion what-

ever with a cross, but are intended to symbolize or set forth the Holy Trinity.

It may not be out of place here, nor uninteresting to our readers, if we say a few words on this subject, and quote a few passages from Mr. French's unfortunately unpublished "Notes on the Nimbus."

However it may appear on investigation, it certainly cannot be a matter of surprise that the bars on the attribute of the Deity should be supposed to represent a cross, the lower limb of which was covered by the head, particularly as the figures of Christ, most prevalent in the works of all the ages of Christian art, are almost universally found invested with nimbi displaying them. Were this peculiar attribute confined to the representations of our Saviour, there would be little occasion to doubt it being cruciform; but such is not the case,—we find all the persons of the Trinity alike invested with it. The question then arises, why should the Father and Holy Spirit bear the cross; a symbol which throughout all the departments of art is peculiarly confined to our Saviour and matters relating to Him? And in consequence of the unanswerable nature of the question, the following suggestion demands attention—may not the *three* bars (for there are never *four*) on the nimbus allude to the

Holy Trinity? If so, Father, Son, and Spirit have alike a right to them as members of the great and unapproachable Three in One.

Mr. French remarks, "We venture, though with some diffidence, to hazard the opinion, that with occasional, but very rare exceptions, the mediæval Christian artist when painting the nimbus of the Deity, did not intend to represent, or at all refer to the cross: but that his purpose was to demonstrate, by three rays of light proceeding from the divine head, that the one person represented was invested with the power, and the glory, as well as the identity, of the other persons forming the Holy Trinity.

"However appropriate as an emblem of the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, who for men's sins suffered death upon it, the cross has not the same apt and significant meaning with reference to the Father and to the Holy Spirit: to them it would be quite as inappropriate as to the Buddhist and Hindoo divinities, whose heads are invested with an ornament similar to that which the Christian artist placed upon the persons of the Holy Trinity, when represented together under the semblance of humanity."

M. Didron, although he universally applies the term

cruciform to the divine nimbus, appears nowise clear as to his opinion on the subject being the right one. In his valuable work on "Christian Iconography," he says, "It seems doubtful whether it can actually have been intended to decorate the field of the Nimbus of God, with a cross; possibly, the form of the ornament which marks the nimbus of divine persons, is not borrowed, as one might be led to believe, from the instrument of our Saviour's suffering.

"The propriety of the Redeemer being represented with a nimbus thus decorated, is sufficiently obvious: but why should it be worn also by the Father and the Holy Spirit? It is as if they wore the badge and insignia of the Son, which would not be very consistent. Besides, the halo encircling the heads of several Buddhist and Hindoo divinities, is marked with a similar cross; and it cannot be supposed that, in these instances, any allusion is designed to the Cross of Calvary."

There is a stronger proof, however, than mere supposition, that the rays on the nimbus do not belong to a cross, namely, that the fourth or lower limb is not represented even in instances where, if the artist had desired to display a cross, it could have been distinctly shown. We can observe in many examples that great

pains have been taken to show the *three* rays when it was a somewhat difficult matter to do so, from the position of the head and body. Sometimes, merely a small corner of the third ray is to be seen, yet sufficient to indicate its presence on the field of the nimbus.

Had a fourth ray been desired, it could at times have been indicated in like manner; but in every case it is absent, clearly from intention on the part of the artist, and not from neglect or mistake.

Mr. French remarks, "A fourth limb or ray in the nimbus of the Saviour is very rare, and of doubtful authority. M. Didron figures only one example,* taken from the stalls in the Cathedral of Amiens, erected in the 16th century, at which time the spirit of Christian symbolism had greatly degenerated from its early purity and simplicity.† The Saviour is represented as seen from behind, a position very unusual, if not unique, and the nimbus, if such be intended, is placed upon the head like

* "Christian Iconography," p. 102.

† No importance can be attributed to this example, if it may be looked upon as one, for not only is its date far too late, but other figures of the persons of the Trinity are found carved on the same stalls without nimbi. From this fact we are inclined to believe that the article placed capways on our Saviour's head is not intended for a nimbus.—W. & G. A.

a cap, the top of which is ornamented with a braided or embroidered device, in some degree resembling a cross, but which may be easily mistaken for a merely fanciful arrangement of pattern.

"In representations of the Veronica there is an opportunity of displaying a fourth limb, and every inducement to indicate a cross, were such intended; but three rays only are found in the examples of this subject."

As our space is very limited, we must, with the above few remarks, close this part of our topic; but we would advise those of our readers who desire to be fully satisfied on the subject to examine it for themselves. Whether we are right or wrong in our opinion of it, the more it is investigated the more truth will be developed.

But as we are fully convinced that the rays on the nimbus are intended to express the Trinity, and not the instrument of our Lord's suffering, we must be pardoned for dispensing with the commonly-accepted term "cruciform," and for substituting in its place the term "tri-radiated," throughout our essay.

The nimbus of God the Holy Ghost differs in no important point from those of the other persons of the Trinity. When the Holy Spirit is represented in human form, He is usually invested with the tri-radiated nimbus;

but we have never met with an example having the rays inscribed with the three Greek or Latin letters so frequently seen in the nimbi of the Father and the Son.

The symbol of the Holy Spirit is generally invested with a circular tri-radiated nimbus, but sometimes with a plain triangular one. It is not unusual to find the symbol represented without a nimbus.

The Aureole and Glory.

BEFORE treating of the nimbus of angels and saints, it is advisable that we should describe the Aureole and Glory, because in art they are particularly connected with the representations of the three Persons of the Godhead.

We observed before that some confusion exists regarding the proper signification of the above terms—so much so, that it is not uncommon to hear the word "glory" used to express the nimbus, while the word "aureole" is very seldom used at all.

The aureole is a most important attribute in Christian

art: it is, in fact, an extended form of the nimbus, but is not used instead of it. The nimbus encircles the head or other portion of the body; the aureole encircles the whole body, and envelopes it in a field of radiance and splendour.

The form of the aureole is very varied, but the most common is that shown in the centre of Plate II.

Sometimes the aureole takes the form of the body and clings closely to it, appearing as a fringe of light; at others, it is removed from it both as regards distance and form—in this case it is composed of many luminous rays issuing from a centre.

Besides the form shown on Plate II., the aureole is commonly met with of a circular shape. The pointed oval is usually applied to standing or full-length figures, the circular to sitting ones, although there are many exceptions to this general rule.

As to the application of the attribute, we will give as near as is necessary the concise words of M. Didron. The aureole cannot be said to belong exclusively to God, although it is an attribute especially characteristic of divinity. It is, in fact, the symbolic token of supreme power, of energy, exalted to the highest possible degree. It ought, therefore, to be given before all to God, who

in Himself is properly and intrinsically the centre of Omnipotence, while His creatures, however lofty their rank and degree, hold it only from Him—like the moon, which shines but with the borrowed radiance of the sun.

The aureole is so completely the attribute of Supreme Power or Divine Omnipotence, that the angels themselves, which of all God's creatures seem most nearly allied to the Creator, are not invested with this mark of dignity.

In some cases, of which the miniatures of illuminated MSS. offer numerous examples, the angels are comprehended within the aureole of God, when they attend Him either at the Creation, on Mount Sinai, or at the Last Judgment; but the aureole does not properly belong to them—it is the attribute of God; and the angels seem as if absorbed in the resplendent luminous atmosphere radiating from His glorious person.

One curious and remarkable coincidence may, however, be noticed in a painted window in Chartres Cathedral. In this window, which is the work of the twelfth century, is a painting of the celestial hierarchy, or the distribution of the angels into nine choirs. Each choir of angels is characterized by a peculiar attribute. The Thrones, represented by two great angels with green wings and sceptres in their hands, and enclosed in a crimson aureole

of elliptical form, are the first and most elevated of the three groups. The Thrones alone are honoured with this badge; the angels, as their names indicate, are the depositories of Almighty power. This fact affords further confirmation of the assertion that the aureole is the peculiar attribute of God; for the Deity, in delegating His authority to Thrones, delegates to them at the same time a portion of His majesty and glory.

The aureole is not so frequently met with in works of art as the nimbus; it was evidently a later introduction, and fell into disuse long before the nimbus disappeared.

The term "glory" is employed to express the combination of the nimbus and the aureole—that is, a person represented with the nimbus investing his head and the aureole surrounding his body is said to be glorified or in glory.

In the language of art the glory expresses or sets forth the most exalted and unapproachable state of deification and sublime perfection. It is, therefore, the attribute of God, as the Great Judge and as the Majesty of Heaven.

The Nimbus of Angels and Saints.

ANGELS are universally invested with circular nimbi. Generally speaking their fields are plain; sometimes, however, they have rich borders of ornament and jewelled work (Fig. 4, Plate II.), and sometimes they have their fields covered with a multitude of divergent rays. Angels are never represented with the tri-radiated nimbus, unless they are personifications of God, and represent Him in some direct manner. Didron very justly says that the rays on the nimbus are somewhat similar to the fleurs-de-lis in heraldry; an indefinite number of fleurs-de-lis indicate noble, but not royal birth, while three fleurs-de-lis characterize royalty—at least during a certain period of heraldic art.

So, also, the nimbus of three rays indicates divinity; a greater number of rays are attributes of created beings, and more especially of angels, the most noble of all creatures.

Thus, then, no angel ever wears the tri-radiated nimbus,

unless, as amongst the Greeks, that angel is a personification of the Deity.

In Greece, Christ is called the Angel of the Great Will, and He is often represented, at the back of the apse of the left aisle, under the form of a great angel, winged and beardless. This divine angel, this messenger of God, an admirable creation of the Greek mind, wears the divine nimbus. In the scene in which Abraham, seeing three angels, prostrates himself in adoration at the feet of one, the angel whom he adores is frequently invested with a tri-radiated nimbus to signify his being the representative of Deity.* The form of the many-rayed nimbus, worn by angels, is shown in fig. 5.

The nimbus of the Virgin Mary is always circular, and generally very elaborately ornamented. Indeed, as a rule, the nimbus of the Virgin is as richly decorated as the nimbus of God, and is only different from it in not being tri-radiated.

The Holy Apostles were at an early date represented with the nimbus—in fact, as early as our Lord Himself. This we find to be the case from a fresco in the Catacombs, executed in the first ages of the Church, where St. Peter and St. Paul are invested with plain nimbi, similar to

* Slightly altered from the passage in Didron, p. 66.

that worn by Christ, who is depicted sitting between them.

The nimbi worn by the Apostles are in all cases circular, generally plain, or with a simple border, but sometimes richly ornamented. The style and amount of enrichment bestowed on the field of the nimbus vary according to the age and country in which it was executed. The nimbus of Greece and Italy is far more elaborate in its decoration than the nimbus of our northern countries.

The Greek artists were not satisfied with painted ornaments on their fresco works, but wrought the plaster while damp into a sort of relievo, which they richly painted and gilded.

Nimbi executed in gold, silver, and enamel are generally very carefully and beautifully elaborated with colours and repoussé work, and are also adorned with pearls and precious stones. Nimbi as shown in works of stained glass are often very rich in ornament. It was usual at a certain period to inscribe around the borders of the nimbi of saints the names of the persons whose heads they adorned. This useful practice appears to have been introduced at the end of the thirteenth century. (Fig. 6.)

It is to be regretted that this practice is not adopted now in works of stained glass, as it would materially assist persons in reading the artist's intention, when examining any single figure or subject depicted.

All the numerous saints, martyrs, confessors, and virgins held in veneration by the Christian Church of the middle ages have the circular nimbus more or less ornamented.

There is one other form of the nimbus that we must mention ere we close this part of our subject, although it is one which will not come into use in the present day.

Men who had attained a considerable degree of sanctity, and were universally recognized as holy and blameless in their lives and actions, were honoured while still living with nimbi.

The nimbus of a living person is quite different in form from any bestowed on the Deity, angels, or saints, being square in shape, and placed upright behind the head, with its lower edge horizontal or parallel with the shoulders.

The square has always been looked upon as inferior to the circle, and hence was employed to symbolize the

earth, while the circle expressed heaven or eternal existence.

The square nimbus is peculiar to Italian art, being found in frescoes, mosaics, illuminations, enamels, carvings, &c.; it is never found in the works of the Greeks or artists north of the Alps.

CHAPTER II.

The Symbols and Emblems of God.

HAVING, as we trust, explained clearly all important matters in connection with the nimbus, its extended and compound forms, we now come to speak of symbols and emblems. First, of necessity, are the symbols and emblems of God: under this head we include those of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, and also those of the Trinity or Godhead.

The Symbol of God the Father.

DURING the first eight centuries of the Christian era, and throughout all departments of art, God

the Father was represented, or His presence indicated, by a single symbol; that symbol was a hand, usually shown as issuing from a mass of clouds, the clouds of heaven, which were closed around the arm to hide the awful and glorious Majesty, which "no man could behold and live."

The origin of this symbol is obvious. We find in the Scriptures repeated mention made of the "Hand" and the "Arm of the Lord," as the instruments of His Almighty Power and Will.*

The hand continued to be adopted by artists until about the beginning of the seventeenth century. We have already mentioned that up to the ninth century this symbol alone was employed to indicate the presence of Jehovah; after that date we find that artists began to paint portraitures of God the Father.

It is somewhat difficult to ascribe a satisfactory reason why personal representations of the Deity were entirely eschewed for so long a period, to become so prevalent during a later; the most likely one appears

* See Neh. ii. 18; Job xix. 21; Eccl. ii. 24; Exod. xvi. 3; Josh. iv. 24; 1 Kings xviii. 46; 2 Kings iii. 15; Isaiah xix. 16; Isaiah xxv. 10; Isaiah lix. 1; Mark ii. 33; 1 Peter v. 6; Exod. xv. 16; Psalm lxxxix. 21; Isaiah li. 5-9; Isaiah lxii. 8; Ezek. xx. 33; Luke i. 51, &c.

to be that they were shunned by the early Christians through a praiseworthy and proper feeling of fear and reverence. Truly, it is vain for man to essay to depict the Invisible God, or give form and features to His Awful Presence.

In portraitures we find the Father represented either as a half-figure, issuing (as in the case of the hand) from clouds, or a full-length figure sitting or standing. Sometimes His head only is depicted, looking down from heaven, as in a French miniature of the fourteenth century.*

In portraitures, God usually appears as an aged, but not infirm, man of august and venerable countenance, and generally wears a beard and long hair. His head is always invested with a circular tri-radiated, triangular, or lozenge-shaped nimbus. He is also represented as a King, and wears a crown as well as a nimbus; and as a Pope—in this case He is richly habited in the papal robes, and wears a tiara encircled either with three or five royal crowns.

Of the Hand, there are several varieties, differing from each other in form and position. The hand is sometimes represented closed or grasping some object,

* Figured in Didron, p. 211.

which it is presenting to the person depicted below, or is held by the person represented, as the sword or knife in the hand of Abraham. The hand is often entirely open, with all the fingers extended, and from them rays of light are shown issuing. The hand in the latter instance is symbolic of Divine grace and favour poured forth upon all below.

Perhaps the most common form of the hand is that which represents it in the act of blessing. There are two forms of the blessing to be found in art: one called the Greek, because it was adopted by the Eastern Church; the other the Latin, because it was adopted by the Western Christians. The difference lies only in the position of the fingers.

The Greek form has the third finger bent towards the palm, and is crossed by the thumb, while the second and fourth fingers are curved inwards. This arrangement is symbolical of the name Jesus Christ, by representing four letters which begin and end the Sacred Name in Greek. The first finger, which is straight, stands for the letter I *(Iota)*,—the second, curved, represents C (the ancient *Sigma* of the Greeks),—the third finger, which is crossed by the thumb, supplies X *(Chi)*,—and the fourth finger represents another C; thus forming

ĪC—X̄C., the Greek monogram of Jesus Christ (ΙησουC ΧριστὸC).

The Latin benediction does not appear to represent letters, as in the Greek form, but to be purely symbolical. It shows the third and fourth fingers closed on the palm, leaving the thumb and first and second fingers extended. The arrangement is evidently intended to express the Trinity, in Whose name the benediction is given.

The hand is often, but not always, invested with the nimbus; sometimes it is plain, though generally (and correctly) it is tri-radiated.

Symbols and Emblems of God the Son.

THE earliest symbols and figures of God the Son, as might be expected, are to be found in the works of the first Christians in the Catacombs. One of the favourite symbols of the Saviour is the Good Shepherd; it is found conspicuously displayed in fresco-paintings on the walls and sarcophagi, as well as upon lamps and other vessels found in the Catacombs. This

symbol has, of course, the highest authority for its adoption, Christ Himself having said, "I am the Good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." *

In the paintings our Saviour is repeatedly represented as youthful and beardless, clad in a short upper garment or tunic, to which is at times added a flowing cloak or mantle. The tunic is frequently ornamented with two bands down the front, and is usually gathered at the waist by a belt.

Sometimes the Good Shepherd bears a sheep on His shoulders, and carries a syrinx or Pan's pipe in His right hand, while His left hand is placed on His breast holding the feet of the sheep; at others He is depicted without the sheep on His shoulders, standing among His faithful flock. The sheep all appear to know their Shepherd, and look up to Him as if craving His notice and caresses.

This symbol of Christ, although in frequent use

* St. John x. 14, 15, 16.

during the early ages of Christianity, appears to have died out about the seventh or eighth century.*

Another image of our Saviour was Orpheus, represented seated among beasts and birds, playing upon a lyre. Although this was a favourite and expressive symbol among the first or early converts to the Christian Faith, it was comparatively little used by them: perhaps the fact of its being derived from a Pagan source kept it from being adopted in preference to those symbols derived from the Christian writings,

* This favourite image of the Saviour occupies a conspicuous place on the walls and sarcophagi of the catacombs, on the lamps found in the tombs, on the glass vessels, and in the mosiacs of the old Italian churches; but it is strange to say that this symbolic representation, which appears to have conveyed such consoling and pleasing ideas to the minds of the early Christians, was not known after the year 1000, no trace of it being found from the 11th to the 16th century. The authority from which it was derived was as high as that which gave its sanction to the symbol of the Lamb, the Saviour Himself proclaiming, "I am the Good Shepherd;" it was an image frequently introduced into the Psalms and the Prophecies of the Old Testament, and in the Epistles we find it carried on in the title given to Christ, of the "Great Shepherd of the Sheep." The variety of forms in which He appears in this character includes every office which He might be supposed to fulfil. The two principal varieties show the Good Shepherd caring for the sheep, in the midst of His flock, with or without the shepherd's flute, and sorrowing for the lost one, or bearing it home on His shoulders, rejoicing: this last is the most frequent representation, and is also the oldest, especially in the Western Church. From Eusebius, we

or from ideas purely in accordance with the teaching of Christ.

The reasons for the adoption of Orpheus as a symbol of the Saviour are variously stated; those given by Mr. Charles Browne, in his short but interesting

find that Constantine, in adorning his new city, placed this subject on one of the Fountains of the Forum. The similitude of the Good Shepherd watching over His flock was not new to Christianity; the Old Testament has many instances of it, and it must have been familiar to the minds of the Jews; neither was it unknown to the Pagans, and some of the first representations show a strange mixture of Christian and Pagan ideas and feeling.—TWINING, p. 29.

The Good Shepherd, bearing the sheep upon His shoulders and holding in His hand the Pandæan flute, is a very common subject in the earliest Christian era, at which time religion was wonderfully gentle in spirit. . . . . The shepherds hold the lost sheep more or less firmly on their shoulders, and seem more or less in fear, lest it should a second time escape. It is generally held by the four feet, with two hands. . . . . At other times, and more especially when the right hand is occupied by a musical instrument, the sheep is retained by one hand only. Finally, the sheep is seated affectionately on the shoulder of the Good Shepherd, who fears not, so weary is it, and so rejoiced at returning to its fold, that it will again endeavour to escape. . . . . The Good Shepherd Himself seems sometimes more weary than at others, of the burden which He bears upon His shoulders, or with the journey He has made in order to recover His lost sheep; but ordinarily He appears unconscious either of the burden or the fatigue. . . . . Figures of the Good Shepherd are usually placed in the most honourable part of the sarcophagi and paintings in the catacombs; they occupy the centre of the tomb or of the vaulting, and are placed in the middle of the archivaults and tympanum.—DIDRON, p. 339.

lecture on Symbolism,* appear to us to be so satisfactory, both as regards argument and the manner in which they are put, that we give them here in his own words :—

"Upon many of the early sarcophagi and tombs found in the catacombs of Rome, those subterraneous caverns in which the Christians were accustomed to assemble, for the performance in secret of those religious rites which persecution forbade them to exhibit in the light of day, is to be found the representation of Orpheus playing on his lyre, in situations, and with accessories, which, were direct information wanting, would leave no doubt of the figure being intended as a symbol of our Lord Himself.

"Orpheus, as the old mythologists told, was a musician, who produced such exquisite harmony from the strings of his lyre, that all nature, animate and inanimate, stocks and stones, trees and beasts, birds and fishes, thronged around him when he played, gave up the ferocity or dull brutishness of their natures, and became gentle, amiable, and of peaceful disposition. Then Orpheus, they said, was enamoured of Eurydice, who, alas, treading through the long grass was stung to death by a serpent, carried

* Joseph Masters. London, 1856.

off to the realms of darkness, and there committed to the unrelenting custody of the infernal powers. Then love divine stirs Orpheus' breast; in search of his beloved and lost Eurydice, he, too, descends to the infernal regions, with his mysterious powers of harmony charms the grim potentates of hell, and bears back the loved and lost one to the realms of light and joy.

"Now here was a story which to a mind trained to figurative and allegorical subjects, seemed in many ways to point to the character and history of our Blessed Lord. He Who commanded the powers of Nature, Whom the winds and the waves obeyed, at Whose bidding the lion should lie down with the lamb, and peace should reign in the world; Who, again, in His ardent love for the soul of man, stung to death by the bite of a serpent, that old serpent—the Devil, overcame death, and Himself descended into hell, to bring man's lost soul back to heaven and happiness; it was He, I say, Whom this history seemed to foreshadow; so that all these points of resemblance suggested Orpheus to the minds of the early Christians, as a fitting symbol under which to represent our Lord Himself."

Perhaps of all the symbols of our Saviour the one of which we are about to treat is the most beautiful and

appropriate; at the same time it was the most favourite and most frequently used symbol in both the early and later eras of the Church, and it continues a favourite image to the present hour. This symbol is the Lamb; and we certainly cannot wonder at the favour it has received when we consider how perfectly it sets forth the qualities that characterized our Blessed Lord.

The Lamb has the same high authority for its adoption as the Good Shepherd, for various passages both in the Old and New Testament refer to Christ under the image of the Lamb.

He was typified by the Lamb under the Mosaic Law, and the Prophets in various instances employed the symbol in speaking of the future Messiah. In the New Testament writings the image is again used, and in a more direct manner.*

* Christ dying on the cross, is the symbolic lamb spoken of by the prophets, the lamb who meets death, and suffers Himself to be slain without murmuring. Christ, shedding His blood for our redemption, is the lamb slain by the children of Israel, and with the blood of which the houses to be preserved from the wrath of God were marked with the celestial "*tau*." The Paschal Lamb, eaten by the Israelites on the night preceding their departure from Egypt, is the type of that other Divine Lamb of whom Christians are to partake at Easter, in order thereby to free themselves from the bondage in which they are held by vice. St. John, in the Apocalypse, saw Christ,

In the Gospel according to St. John, I., 29, John the Baptist exclaims, on beholding Jesus coming unto him, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world." And again, in the 36th verse, "Behold the Lamb of God."

In the catacombs are to be found many examples of the symbolic lamb slightly differing from each other in their details and accessories. These representations appear both in bas-relief and in fresco. The earliest examples display the lamb in a standing posture devoid of the attribute of holiness, its head is sometimes, however, surmounted by a simple cross or the Greek monogram (☧ crossed by a ℙ).

The most beautiful representations of the Holy Lamb are those in which it is depicted, invested with an inscribed nimbus, standing upon a small hill, from which four streams are flowing. This composition is full of force and meaning: the hill represents the Church of Christ, the mountain of God's House; the streams, the four Holy Gospels—the four rivers of Paradise, ever

under the form of a Lamb, wounded in the throat, and opening the book with the seven seals. Finally, Christ is the Lamb, who offered Himself as a victim to wash away in His own blood the pollution of our nature, and of our carnal actions.—Didron, p. 318.

flowing onward through and invigorating the pastures of the Church on earth. The inscribed nimbus usually presents the Greek monogram associated with alpha (A) and omega (Ω)—the beginning and the end.

Later representations of the Lamb, in the catacombs and in the early churches of Rome, have the divine nimbus, or circular disc tri-radiated. One example of the symbol occurs in a sculpture in the catacombs, having the divine nimbus with a small cross marked on each of its three rays.

The Lamb became somewhat altered in general appearance after the sixth century. In works executed since that date the mount and the four flowing rivers are not depicted: the Lamb appears standing on the ground, bearing a cross, symbolical of the Passion, and a small cross-adorned banner, symbolical of Christ's victory triumphant over Death and Hell, and it is universally invested with a tri-radiated nimbus. This beautiful and favourite symbol is usually termed the *Agnus Dei.* (Fig. 1, Plate III.)

We may remark here that a lamb was at times used to set forth the meek Christian, timid and faithful. Twelve lambs, when depicted together, generally in regular procession, represented the Apostles of Christ, and a thirteenth,

more important and exalted than the others, symbolized our Saviour, and was the only one invested with the nimbus.

The Lion has also been used as a symbol of Christ, although we very seldom meet with it in art. Many reasons may have given cause for its adoption, but the most forcible one appears to be the passage in the Book of Revelation, where Christ is called "the Lion of the tribe of Judah." As regards the question, whether the Lion, as a symbol of Christ, should or should not be invested with the divine nimbus, we are clearly of opinion that, without that distinguishing attribute, the symbol is voiceless. Didron remarks :—"Sometimes, although at this moment I can recal but two instances of the fact, we meet with a lion bearing a cruciform* nimbus.

A figure of our Redeemer, often to be met with in early art, is the Pelican. It is represented surrounded with its young, and feeding them with its own blood. It is said that the Naturalists of old, observing that the Pelican had a crimson stain on the lip of its beak, reported that it was accustomed to feed its young with

* In our chapter on the Nimbus we have shown that the bars, which Didron and others have taken to be a cross on the field of the divine nimbus, are but three rays setting forth the Trinity.

the flowing blood of its own breast, which it tore for the purpose.

In this belief the early Christians adopted the Pelican to figure Christ, and set forth our redemption through His blood, which was willingly shed for us, His children.

The Pelican was never invested with the nimbus, and, therefore, its place in art is not so exalted as the foregoing symbols.

Although the Pelican is a beautiful and expressive figure of Christ, and cannot be too often used in modern work, we can scarcely claim for it a position as a symbol.*

* "By the words symbol and figure, we understand any sensible or tangible design, employed to convey an idea; the circular nimbus surrounding the heads of saints is the material sign of their holiness. Considered in this light, the symbol and the figure are precisely the same. They differ in the following points. A symbol is an exterior formula, the representation of some dogma of religious belief; it is, like the dogma itself, an article of faith. The lamb is the symbol of Jesus Christ; for the sacred texts relating to the Divine lamb, oblige us to receive it as the necessary and dogmatical representative of Christ. The Lamb, indeed, is Christ Himself, Christ in person, and under a visible aspect. A figure, on the other hand, is an arbitrary representation of any idea. The figure is not imposed by sacred dogmas, or by the revealed word, but results simply from the free operation of the human mind. The figure is a variable creation of the imagination. We are required to receive a symbol, but may be persuaded to admit a figure; the first demands our faith, the second fascinates the mind. Christ is symbolized

From very early times our Saviour has been set forth under the figure of a Fish. As we shall attempt to show in a future chapter, the Fish has been used in art as a symbol of Baptism as well as a figure of Jesus Christ.

At as early a date as the fourth century, it appears to have been known that the five Greek letters forming

by a lion, and, still more appropriately, by a lamb; but He is merely figured by a pelican. The pelican, lacerating her breast, that her young may be nourished with her blood, is an appropriate figure of Jesus, dying, and shedding His blood for the salvation of mankind. Still the pelican never has a nimbus, still less would it have a cruciform nimbus; neither is Christ ever represented by the pelican in the Courts of Heaven, nor does He take part under that form in any of the events there accomplished. The lamb, on the contrary, wearing a nimbus divided by a cross, is constantly depicted in scenes both from the Apocalypse and the Gospels; he is, indeed, Christ Himself, under the form and appearance of a lamb. Lastly, the symbol, when fully developed, becomes a myth; but the figure, unfolded in all its details, presents nothing more than an allegory. A myth is a belief, an assemblage of dogmas; an allegory is merely a combination of metaphors, and may be accepted or rejected at pleasure. A *myth* belongs to faith, an *allegory* rests only on opinion. The symbol is a divine creation, a revelation from God; the figure is of human invention and by man set forth. The water of baptism, the Eucharistic bread and wine, are signs, or symbols. It would not be possible in the Eucharist to substitute" water for wine, nor in baptism to substitute wine for water, "for those symbols are unchangeably, eternally the same. One figure may on the other hand be substituted for another, with perfect propriety; the vine, yielding its juice for the nourishment of man, may take the place of the pelican, which gives her blood to

the word fish in that language (**ΙΧΘΥΣ**), when separated supplied the initials for the five words—

Ἰησοῦς	Χριστὸς	Θεοῦ Υἱὸς	Σωτὴρ
Jesus	Christ	(the) Son of God	(the) Saviour.

And it was doubtless this fact that gave cause for the adoption of the Fish as a figure of our Lord.

Several early writers, among whom is St. Augustine, speak of the Fish as a figure of Christ.

support her young. Finally, figures may be created by the imagination at pleasure ; but not so symbols."—M. DIDRON (who appears to have been guided in the above remarks by M. J. J. Ampere's lectures on the subject, delivered at the College of France in 1837).

"With regard to the two words used . . . I ought perhaps to say something of the meaning to be attached to them, as well as of the distinction between them ; for that there is a distinction, few persons will be inclined to doubt, though it may not be very easy to define it. I believe that the words Symbol and Emblem are often used indifferently to express the same meaning ; but it should be observed that the term Symbol may sometimes be used for an Emblem, where the contrary would not be true ; as, for instance, the Anchor may be either the Symbol or Emblem of Hope ; but we could not say that the Lamb or the Good Shepherd were Emblems of Christ, since He Himself is embodied in or represented by them. They must therefore be distinguished as Symbols ; and this term may then be considered as something expressive of the whole being and character, rather than any particular attribute or quality, of the person or thing represented. The same object, however, may clearly be considered a Symbol as well as an Emblem, as the Sword is the Symbol of martyrdom, and the peculiar Emblem of St. Paul."—L. TWINING.

It is supposed, perhaps with some foundation, that the pointed oval form so frequently employed in all branches of Christian art, and which is most commonly used for the aureole (see Chapter I. and Plate II., Fig. 9), was derived from the shape of the body of a fish. The familiar name for the pointed form when it occurs in art is *Vesica Piscis.*

The Grape Vine is sometimes employed as a symbol of Christ, it being, like the Good Shepherd and the Lamb, derived direct from the Scriptures. Christ Himself says by the mouth of St. John, "I am the true vine," and again, "I am the vine." * A bunch of grapes figures Him who gave His body and blood for man.

The important symbol of Jesus Christ, the Cross, and the several monograms used to set forth His name, shall be treated of in our next chapter.

Symbols of God the Holy Ghost.

DURING the first eleven centuries of the Christian era, the Holy Ghost was almost exclusively

* St. John, chap. xv. 1 and 5.

symbolized by a Dove. There is little doubt but that this symbol was derived from the New Testament. In the recorded Baptism of our Lord the Evangelist declares that the Holy Spirit descended as a Dove upon our Saviour.

Although we must believe that Scripture has supplied the principal authority for the adoption of the Dove as a symbol of the Holy Ghost, yet there are other reasons which, in looking at the question, may not be neglected. As M. Didron gives us some apt remarks on the subject, we cannot do better than quote them here:— "Motion and rapidity are the essential properties of the mind; when, therefore, men desired to represent under a visible form that divine and viewless spirit by which all nature is animated, the mind naturally reverted to that living being which is in the highest degree endowed with velocity and activity of movement. The bird in one moment rises from the earth and soars upwards into the expanse of heaven, where it vanishes from our sight; it transports itself from country to country, with a facility equalled only by its speed; it traverses in a moment the largest tracts of space, in all their height and extent. The bird, in the organic kingdom, was necessarily selected as the image of mind,

or the spirit, which is breath set in motion, rapidity vivified.

"The Dove, amongst birds, from its gentle and loving nature, in the first place, and in the second, from the purity of its plumage, has been preferably selected as the image of the Holy Ghost. Indeed, a white Dove is regarded, both in historical narration and in works of art, as the impersonation of the Spirit of God."

The earliest representation of the symbolic Dove we meet with in art is in a bas-relief on a tomb; its date is about A.D. 359. It appears hovering over a lamb (which symbolizes our Saviour), and shedding the Divine blessing.

In representations of the Baptism of Christ, the Dove is usually shown descending, with outstretched wings, and throwing from its beak a bright stream of rays upon the head of the Saviour. But, in other subjects in which the Dove appears, it is shown in all positions, in upward, or horizontal flight, or at rest.

The colour of the Dove is, in all cases, pure white, and sometimes it has red feet and beak. It is frequently, especially in early work, represented without a nimbus; but it is obviously incorrect to omit the attribute. It appears, at times, invested with a plain nimbus; at others,

properly, with the tri-radiated nimbus, or three groups of three rays without the bounding circle, as may be seen in an initial letter in a "Book of Hours" of the thirteenth century, preserved in the British Museum.

In a mosaic, representing the Virgin and the Infant Saviour, in the cathedral of Capua, dating about A.D. 780, the symbolic Dove is depicted invested with a triangular nimbus.

Although the latter example is the only one we are aware of in which the triangular nimbus appears, we are of opinion that its application to the Divine Dove is strictly correct, and therefore recommend its adoption in modern work. The Dove, when used as a symbol of the Holy Ghost, should by no means be invested with a plain nimbus, notwithstanding early usage gives authority for it. When the triangular one is not adopted, the ordinary tri-radiated nimbus must be applied, as shown in Plate V., Fig. 1.

The proper colour for the field of the nimbus is yellow (or gold), with red rays. The rays are sometimes black in existing examples, and the nimbus is sometimes red with gold rays.

The drawing of the Dove on Plate V. shows it in its most complete form. It is descending from heaven,

which is set forth by the blue ground studded with stars; invested with the tri-radiated nimbus, which tells that it symbolizes a Person of the Holy Trinity; and shedding rays of light, which represent the Divine blessing poured down.

Seven Doves are frequently depicted together, each one being in all respects similar to the single Dove, adopted to symbolize the Holy Ghost. These Doves represent the seven Spirits of God, the seven Gifts of the Spirit, or the one Holy Spirit in His sevenfold manifestations of Grace. The idea of the Spirits, which are thus set forth, is evidently derived from Scripture. Isaiah utters these prophetic words regarding the Messiah*:—"And there shall come forth a Rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Might, the Spirit of Knowledge and the fear of the Lord."

St. John speaks of the seven Spirits of God in his Revelation, saying,† "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst

* Isaiah xi. 1, 2. † Revelation v. 6, 11, 12.

of the elders, stood a lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth. And I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing."

It will be observed that a considerable difference exists between the Gifts of the Spirit enumerated by Isaiah and those mentioned by St. John, two only being the same, Wisdom and Strength, or Might.

Sometimes, instead of seven Doves, seven burning Lamps are depicted to symbolize the Spirits of God. St John says, in the Apocalypse, "And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God."

The only other symbol of the Holy Ghost with which we are acquainted, and which remains to be noticed, is the Eagle.

This symbol was adopted by the ancient Hebrews, and when it appears in art, it is generally in connexion with persons of the Old Testament.

The Eagle, as a symbol of the Spirit, is of very rare occurrence in Christian art, it being commonly employed to symbolize St. John the Evangelist.

The Eagle is depicted on the painted roof of St. Alban's Abbey, and there is good reason to believe that it is there intended to symbolize the Holy Ghost, from the fact that it appears equal in importance and dignity to the Agnus Dei, which is its accompanying symbol. The heads of both the Lamb and the Eagle are invested with nimbi precisely similar. The nimbi are ornamented, but are not tri-radiated.

Symbols and Emblems of the Holy Trinity.

DURING the early centuries of the Christian Church but few attempts appear to have been made by artists to express the sublime and awful mystery of the Holy Trinity. Indeed we meet with few symbols or emblems to which any weight may be attached until we enter the 9th century. From

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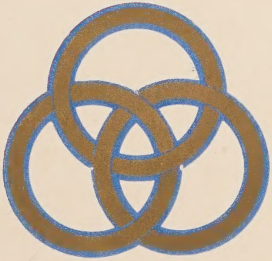

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that period, however, they are of very frequent occurrence in all branches of Christian art.

A much greater variety exists in the portraitures than in the symbolic representations of the Trinity, but as there is an impropriety in attempting to set forth the Sacred Mystery by means of figures in the human form, we shall dismiss this portion of the subject with a few passing remarks, and confine ourselves more particularly to those purely symbolical forms which have been adopted by artists during the long period of a thousand years to express the doctrine of the Godhead.

From about the end of the 9th century human figures were frequently employed to set forth the Three Persons of the Trinity. These figures were grouped in various ways. Sometimes three were depicted, representing all the persons of the Godhead. At others two were shown, representing God the Father and our Saviour, the presence of the Holy Ghost being indicated by His symbol the Dove. Frequently one human form only was used to set forth God the Father, both God the Son and the Holy Ghost being represented by symbols, usually the Lamb and Dove.

An interesting example of the first-mentioned treat-

ment of the subject is to be seen in a miniature of the 14th century in a French Manuscript preserved in the Royal Library at Paris.

In this representation of the Trinity the Father is seated in the centre, with the Saviour on His right and the Holy Ghost on His left hand. The Father holds in His hand the orb, the attribute of sovereignty; the Son supports a small cross; the Holy Ghost holds two open tablets, which express intelligence and perfect knowledge. The figures are shown of the same age; and they are all enveloped with one mantle, which gracefully falls from shoulder to shoulder, being clasped on each breast by a brooch. The Three Persons are invested with the tri-radiated nimbus.

In a MS. of the 14th century, preserved in the British Museum, there is an interesting example of the second treatment. God the Father and God the Son are represented of the same age, and are clothed alike; both wear the tri-radiated nimbus and carry the orb of sovereignty. The Holy Ghost appears between them in the form of the Dove.

Another example, perhaps the finest that exists, is to be found in the Grimani Breviary, preserved in St. Mark's Library at Venice, a beautiful etching of

which is inserted in the "History of our Lord," by Mrs. Jameson and Lady Eastlake.* To this drawing we beg to refer our readers.

Examples of the last-mentioned treatment are numerous: a very interesting one, from a Saxon manuscript of the 11th century in the British Museum, is figured in Twining's "Symbols of Early and Mediæval Art." † In the centre of the composition is a figure representing God the Father, on His right is the Agnus Dei, and on His left the Dove.

There is another Trinity, frequently to be met with in art, which differs from those already enumerated. This treatment presents God the Father as a venerable figure (generally crowned) supporting a large crucifix: the Dove appears, usually seated on the upper limb of the Cross. ‡

The most appropriate symbolic representation of the Trinity is that produced by depicting the symbols of the Three Persons, combined in one group—the Hand,

* Published by Longman & Co. 1864.

† Plate XXXV.

‡ Those who desire to become thoroughly acquainted with this subject in all its branches, should consult M. Didron's "Christian Iconography" (French edition), where it is most fully and learnedly discussed.

the Lamb, and the Dove. We are not aware of a symbol so formed being in existence in ancient art works. One is said to have been executed in mosaic for the Basilica of Nola, but it no longer exists.

The emblems of the Trinity are few and expressive. The one which is at once the simplest and most beautiful is the equilateral triangle (woodcut Fig. 1). Its three sides and angles are equal, and all are complete in themselves, and when combined form a perfect figure. The doctrine of the Trinity is distinctly symbolized by this figure; the equality of its three component parts declares the perfect equality of the Persons of the Godhead, while the union of those parts speaks of the unity of the Godhead.

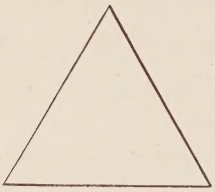


Fig. 1.

The appropriateness of this geometrical form appears to have been acknowledged by artists of all ages, and during the early centuries of the Church it was probably the only one used to set forth the Trinity.

The triangle appears in the Catacombs, carved on the gravestones of the converts, but it is of rare occurrence in comparison with other symbols and emblems.

The emblem of the Trinity as represented in the accompanying woodcut (Fig. 2) is doubtless familiar to most of our readers, having been very frequently adopted in modern times. It is usually to be seen painted over the altars in our churches, particularly in the classic ones built during the last two centuries, either encircled with divergent rays (as in Fig. 2) or surrounded by clouds to give it prominence and effect. The appearance of the latter composition is, however, anything but satisfactory or pleasing.

Fig. 2.

The emblem may be said, comparatively speaking, to be of modern introduction, not having been adopted until the true feeling of symbolism had died out. It appears to have been first used in the 16th century, when the practice of painting portraitures of God the Father and the Holy Ghost had ceased to be encouraged.

The inscription in the centre of the triangle is the name of God or Jehovah, written in Hebrew characters. The circle of rays may be accepted as symbolic of eternity; but when the idea of eternal existence is

desired to be distinctly expressed, a circle should be described around the emblem, as shown in Fig. 3, Plate III. Rays, indicative of glory and brightness, may be placed around the circle if considered desirable.

Fig. 3.

The trefoil or shamrock, figured in the woodcut (Fig. 3), is an emblem almost as simple and expressive as the triangle. When it was first introduced in art is uncertain, but it appears not to have been adopted earlier than the 10th century. During the 13th and 14th centuries the trefoil was used in great profusion in architectural details, in stained glass, painted decoration, and in illuminations.

St. Patrick is said to have first suggested the emblem in the manner detailed in the following story, which, although it is doubtless known to most of our readers, we must be pardoned for inserting here. In the first place, let us remark, St. Patrick visited Ireland, having received a mission from Pope Celestine, for the purpose of converting to Christianity the rude Irish, whose dark and benighted state called forth the sympathies of this holy man. After affronting numerous dangers, and undergoing the greatest fatigue, his zeal was fully rewarded

by success. Thousands embraced the Christian faith, among whom were the kings and chiefs of the various districts. In short, after an active ministry of forty years he died, leaving Ireland christianized and full of religious institutions, destined to become famous throughout Western Christendom.

We now come to the simple legend which details how St. Patrick gave to Ireland her national emblem, now so gracefully united with the Rose of England and the Thistle of Scotland.

When engaged in preaching to an assembled multitude of eager listeners, and in attempting to convey to their minds some idea of the mysterious Godhead, the worthy Saint found great difficulty in making so refined a doctrine appreciable to their dull senses, till casting his eyes around for the purpose of finding some object which would act as an illustration, he caught sight of the simple shamrock-leaf growing close to where he stood.

Nothing could be more apposite—this was the illustration he wanted. He immediately plucked it, and, holding it up so as to be seen by all, explained how the leaf, so well known to them, was an emblem of that Divine and wonderful Trinity of which he had

been speaking. He pointed out to the surprised gaze of his listeners that there were three perfect and distinct leaves in the shamrock, and yet they, united, formed but one perfect leaf. Thus St. Patrick gained the means of making an impression on the minds of the ignorant heathen of his day, which, by his earnestness and eloquence, he was enabled to improve until they were taught the truths of the Gospel of Christ.

We of this enlightened and unimaginative nineteenth century may learn a lesson from this simple legend which we should do well to respect. Does it not tell us that there is an efficacy in adopting simple means as teachers and remembrancers of great truths? It is almost needless to remark that, to a mind imbued with a feeling for symbolism, every object in the daily walk of life may have the effect of recalling those truths which are so often, but which never should be forgotten.

The form of emblem shown on Plate III., fig. 4, is very frequently used in preference to the plain triangle; it is composed of two triangles intersecting each other, forming a star of six equal points. It is commonly accepted as expressive of the infinity of the Trinity. This idea is still further carried out in a Greek painting

of the 15th century,* where we find four equilateral triangles placed behind one another, producing a star of twelve points. The emblem is in this instance used as an aureole, surrounding a half-length figure of Christ.

The term "pentacle" is frequently applied to the entwined triangles (Plate III., Fig. 4), but it is evidently incorrect, the form presenting six and not five points as the term suggests.

The form shown in the woodcut (Fig. 4) may correctly be called a pentacle, but as it is neither so satisfactory as regards shape, nor so expressive, it is not likely to be adopted in preference to the combination shown on Plate III.

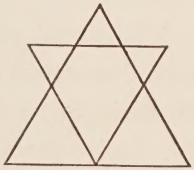


Fig. 4.

The circle, as an emblem of eternity, or eternal existance, may with propriety be accepted as an emblem of God, and three circles entwined together may likewise be accepted as an appropriate emblem of the Trinity—the Three Eternal Beings in Unity. A beautiful example of this emblem is to be seen in a French manuscript of the 13th century, preserved in the Library of Chartres.† It

* Figured in Didron, p. 282.

† Figured in Twining, Plate 35.

is composed of three open circles or rings entwined in the same manner as those shown in Plate III., Fig. 5. In the outer spaces of the circles are inscribed the three syllables of the word "trinitas;" and in the centre space is inscribed the word "unitas."

The remaining emblem of which we have to speak before closing our present chapter is that represented on Plate III., Fig. 2. It is found portrayed in painted glass, engraved on monumental brasses, and it also occurs as an architectural enrichment. Its form varies, although the general treatment remains the same in all examples. That shown in Fig. 2 is founded upon the equilateral triangle; the circular aureoles at the angles contain the initials of the names of the three Persons of the Trinity, and the aureole contains the word "Deus."

The whole inscription reads thus:—"Pater non est Filius—Filius non est Spiritus Sanctus—Spiritus Sanctus non est Pater—Pater est Deus—Filius est Deus—Spiritus Sanctus est Deus." That is:—The Father is not the Son—The Son is not the Holy Ghost—The Holy Ghost is not the Father. The Father is God—The Son is God—The Holy Ghost is God.

CHAPTER III.

The Cross.

AMONGST all the symbols of our Blessed Lord, the Cross stands pre-eminent. It is at once the oldest and most universal of all symbols, and the use which holy persons have made of it, and the reverence in which it has been held in all ages of the Church, have consecrated and endeared it to every Christian.

Apart from being a perfect symbol of Christ, the Cross, having been the instrument of His great sacrifice, becomes the sign of our salvation, the emblem of the Atonement. It is also the universally acknowledged mark or sign of the Christian Faith. Wherever Chris-

tianity is, there will the Cross be seen, and there it will be loved and venerated.

During the early ages of the Church, while, as an instrument of punishment and torture, the Cross remained a horrible reality, the Christians ever dwelt with loving eyes upon its form, seeing it only in the bright rays it sent forth as the true symbol of Him Who died that they might live, and as the sign of their salvation.

Saint Paul says, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."* And so thoroughly did this feeling lay hold of the minds of the early converts that they lost no opportunity of tracing the form of the Cross in all the common objects of life around them. Mr. Browne remarks:—"The early Christians were fond of tracing the sympathies of animate and inanimate Creation with the mysteries of religion: the correspondence, even in outward forms, between the Kingdom of Nature and the Kingdom of Grace. Hence they dwelt with delight upon the innumerable images of the Cross, with which the objects of every-day life provided them: they loved to see the Cross depicted in the wings of birds flying in the air, the masts and yards of ships

* Galat. vi. 14.

sailing on the sea, the meeting of opposite roads in their journeys upon earth, the boughs of trees in the forest, the roofs and rafters of the dwelling-places in towns: in every object almost which could meet the sight of one prepared to recognize it, there was the sacred sign of redemption to be found, to remind them every hour, and every minute, of that warning for ever ringing in their ears, 'If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross daily, and follow Me.'

"Nor was this feeling confined to those of the primitive centuries. It has animated the pen of writers in all ages; and I cannot refrain from quoting here some quaint, though touching lines of our own Donne, pleading against objectors for the retention of this Holy Symbol.

"'Since CHRIST embraced the Cross itself, dare I
His image, th' image of His Cross, deny?
Would I have profit by the sacrifice,
And dare the chosen Altar to despise?
It bore all other sins; but is it fit
That it should bear the sin of scorning it?
Who from the picture would avert his eye,
How should he fly His pains Who there did die?
From me no pulpit, nor misgrounded law,
Nor scandal taken, shall this Cross withdraw.
It shall not, nor it cannot; for the loss
Of this Cross were to me another Cross.

Better were worse; for no affliction,
No cross, were so extreme as to have none.
Who can blot out the Cross which th' instrument
Of God dewed on him in the Sacrament?
Who can deny me power and liberty
To stretch mine arms, and mine own Cross to be?
Swim, and at every stroke thou art my Cross.
The mast and yard are theirs whom seas do toss.
Look down; thou seest our crosses in small things,
Look up; thou seest birds fly on crossed wings.' " *

So fond of the Cross were the early artists, that they expended considerable ingenuity in developing monograms of the Saviour's name, in which the sacred symbol should appear. This they did with more or less success, as will be seen in the concluding portion of the present chapter, which is devoted to the consideration of the various monograms found in Christian art.

The Cross, as a symbol of Christ, is acknowledged to be equal in importance to His other symbol, the Lamb, or the symbol of the Holy Ghost, the Dove. It is in Christian iconography as frequently an impersonation of Christ as His symbol. In representations of the Trinity where God the Father is depicted as a man, and the Holy Spirit as a Dove, Christ is at times imaged by the Cross alone.

* Cited in Neal and Webb's Preface to "Durandus."

The Varieties of the Cross.

THE forms which the Cross assumes are almost countless. Yet, numerous as they are, they are nearly all based upon two principal types, known as the Greek and the Latin.

Those which may not correctly be classed under the two types just mentioned are the Anticipatory Cross and the Ecclesiastical Crosses.

The Anticipatory, or, as it is sometimes termed, the Cross of the Old Testament, consists of three limbs only. (Fig. 3, Plate IV.) In art it is generally confined to the representations of the lifting up of the brazen serpent by Moses in the wilderness. It is also called the Typical Cross, being a type of that on which our Saviour suffered. It is likewise called the Tau Cross from its exact resemblance to the Greek letter T; and again the Cross of Saint Anthony.* In heraldry it is termed the Cross Potent.

* In the Greek pictures, and in the schools of art particularly influenced by Greek traditions, the figures of Anthony, besides the monkish garb, bear the letter T on the left shoulder, or on the cope; it

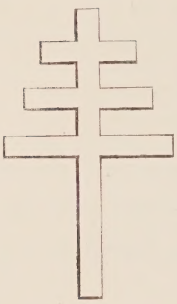


Fig. 5.

The Ecclesiastical Crosses are two in number, and are distinguished from all others by the number of their transverse beams. The most important has three, forming six arms, as shown in the accompanying woodcut (Fig. 5). The lesser has two beams forming four branches (Fig. 4, Plate IV.). These Crosses are used as a medium of hierarchical distinction; the Pope alone being entitled to the triple, while Cardinals and Archbishops are honoured with the double Cross.

The latter form appears to have been first introduced in Greece, where it was very generally adopted, doubtless as a sign of distinction. The name it bears in heraldry would imply as much, being termed the Patriarchal Cross.

is always blue. In Revelation xiv. 1, the elect, who are redeemed from the earth, bear the name of God the Father written on their foreheads: the first letter of the Greek word *Theos*, God, is T, and Anthony and his monks are represented bearing the T.—"For these are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, and in their mouth was found no guile, for they are without fault before the throne of God."—Mrs. Jameson's "Sacred and Legendary Art," vol. ii. p. 749.

We now return to the two principal types, under which all Crosses with four limbs may be grouped. The Greek type includes those which have all their limbs equal, and can be circumscribed by a circle (Woodcut, Fig. 6).

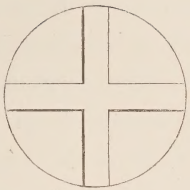


Fig. 6.

The Latin type comprehends those with four unequal limbs, two only of which touch a circle described from the centre of junction (Woodcut, Fig. 7).

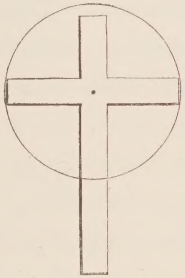


Fig. 7.

The Latin Cross represents the actual Cross on which our Saviour suffered; and in its simple, unadorned shape it is called the Calvary Cross. It appears to have been most generally adopted by the Latins or Western Christians, who were more material in sentiment than the Christians of the East.

The Greeks departed from the shape of the original Cross, and, by equalizing its limbs, idealized it, and rendered it more suitable for ornamental purposes. Nearly all the Crosses used as heraldic charges are of the Greek type; and the same remark holds good with

regard to decorative art. The Latin type is, comparatively speaking, seldom used.

The four limbs, or members of the Greek Cross, are termed its arms, all being of equal importance. Those of the Latin Cross, however, have different names. The lower member is termed the foot; the upper is termed the summit; and the two side members are called the arms. The proportions of the four members vary in different examples. In a properly formed Latin Cross the foot should be longer than the two arms added together, the summit should be the shortest member of all; and the arms should be equal to one another. All the members of both a Latin and Greek Cross should be of equal thickness (Plate IV., Figs. 1 and 5).

The following are the principal varieties of the Cross found in Christian and Heraldic art.

The Tau Cross, Papal Cross, Patriarchal Cross, Calvary Cross, and the plain Greek Cross have already been described.

The Cross of Suffering (Plate IV., Fig. 2) is a Latin Cross, with pointed members.

St. Andrew's Cross is properly included in the Greek type, although it is not formed in the manner common to that type. Its arms are equal, but they do not join

at right angles, or occupy vertical and horizontal positions like those of all other Crosses (Plate IV., Fig. 6). It derives its name from being the supposed instrument of St. Andrew's martyrdom. In heraldry it is termed the Cross Saltire.

The Maltese Cross (Fig. 7) has four spreading arms, resembling fishes' tails, joined in a small centre. This Cross is frequently termed the eight-pointed Cross, but the latter name is anything but expressive. It was borne by the Knights Hospitallers, or Knights of St. John, and the Knights Templars.

The Cross Patée is very frequently confounded with the Maltese Cross, although there is a great difference between them (Plate IV., Fig. 13). The radiating lines of the Patée may either be straight or curved as in the illustration.

The Cross Botonée (Fig. 8) has the extremities of its arms ornamented with trefoils. It is sometimes termed the Cross Trefflée.

The Cross Pommée (Fig. 9) has its arms terminated by balls or circles. This Cross is seldom used in ornamental art, being chiefly confined to heraldry.

The Cross Moline, shown in Fig. 10, has the extremities of its arms divided into two curved members.

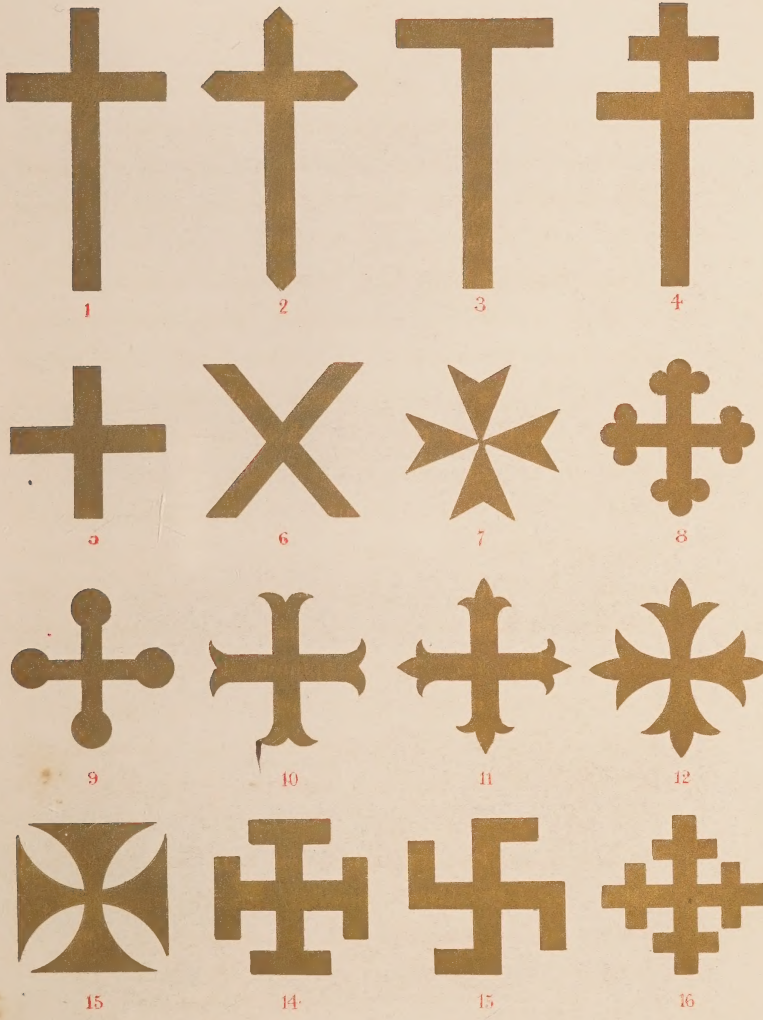
This is a pleasing variety of the Cross, although it is seldom used in comparison with the two which follow.

The Cross Fleurie (Fig. 11) is one of the most beautiful forms of the Cross, and is of very frequent occurrence in all departments of Christian Art. Its arms are usually quite straight, and of the same breadth, except at their extremities, where they burst into graceful triple-leaved terminations. The large Cross in the centre of Plate 1 is a Cross Fleurie. Both our illustrations are of the Greek type, but this variety is frequently found in the Latin form.

The Cross Patonce is another beautiful variety. Its arms terminate, like those of the Cross Fleurie, in three members. They are not straight, however, like the arms of the latter Cross, but curved, and spreading as shown in Fig. 12. In the opinion of many, the Cross Patonce is the most beautiful variety of the symbol, and when of a small size it may justly be considered so; but when large, its proportions render it heavy and unsatisfactory.

The Cross Patonce is found in both the Greek and Latin types; the Greek, however, is the most pleasing, and should be generally adopted in preference to the Latin form.

PLATE IV.



The Cross Potent (Fig. 14) is formed of four Tau Crosses. It is principally used in heraldry.

The Cross Potent Rebated (Fig. 15) is another heraldic Cross.

The Cross Crosslet is a very beautiful variety of the symbol, and one very frequently adopted in art. It is composed of four Latin Crosses joined together. It invariably assumes the Greek form (Fig. 16).

There are numerous other varieties of Crosses differing slightly from those just enumerated; but as they are not of much importance to the student of Christian Symbolism, being purely heraldic, we feel that it is not necessary to allude to them here.*

Symbolism of the Cross.

ALTHOUGH all the forms which the Cross assumes are to be looked upon as symbols of our Blessed Lord, they must also be accepted as demonstrative of

* They are to be found in all complete works on Heraldry.

special facts connected with Him or "His holy religion." The Cross is the acknowledged mark or sign of the Christian Faith throughout all the world.

The forms to which distinct and separate symbolic meanings are attached are not numerous; the following are the most important and expressive.

The Anticipatory Cross is the only imperfect form of the symbol used in art; it has only three members, while all other Crosses have four or more. This fact, however, gives it its value, and renders it an expressive sign of the Old Testament Dispensation or the Law: the complete Cross setting forth the Gospel of Christ.

The Anticipatory Cross should never be used in connexion with our Saviour, although instances occur where artists have introduced it as the instrument of our Lord's sufferings in their representations of the Crucifixion. Their pictures, however, were painted at a time when symbolism was neglected and misunderstood.

The plain Latin Cross, supposed to be the form of that on which our Saviour suffered, is usually called the Calvary Cross, and is employed to symbolize the Passion of Christ, or the Atonement. This being the original

form from which all the numerous Crosses have sprung, it may be considered the most suitable to symbolize our Lord Himself.

Five red marks or jewels are sometimes placed on the face of the Cross. These are intended to allude to the five wounds received by our Saviour, in His hands, His feet, and His side. In addition to these the crown of thorns frequently appears (Fig. 1, Plate VI.).

The Latin Cross, having its four members pointed instead of plain square, is termed the Cross of Suffering, and is understood to set forth the awful sorrow and sufferings of our Lord and His death of agony.

This form is comparatively seldom used in art, from the fact that the eye prefers to contemplate symbols which have a tendency to originate pleasing thoughts in the mind, and shuns those which create sadness and sorrow.

The plain Greek Cross, although it may be adopted with propriety to symbolize Christ, is usually understood to express the Religion of the Cross—to be the emblem of Christianity.

The Greek Cross is the Latin form idealized, and does not speak so much of Christ and His Death as of His Religion. As the four arms extend equally in

four different directions, so does the Gospel of Christ extend its blessings equally over the four quarters of the world—north, south, east, and west.

When the Latin type is employed as the emblem of Christianity, it is generally shown, either fixed in the ground and standing erect, or placed upon three steps, as shown in the woodcut (Fig. 8).

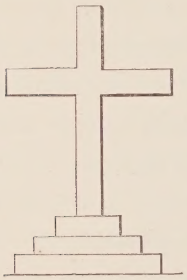


Fig. 8.

In the former instance it tells us that the Religion of Christ is firmly planted on the earth; that it points upward to heaven, and that it spreads its arms abroad over all men. In the latter it teaches us that, like itself, the Religion of the Cross is reared upon a triple foundation—the triple foundation of Faith, Hope, and Charity. The lower step, which rests firmly upon the earth, and which is the largest, is Charity; for we are told in Scripture that it is the greatest of the Christian virtues. The middle step is Hope, and the upper is Faith, in which the Cross is firmly embedded.

The Maltese Cross and the Cross Crosslet signify the same as the simple Greek Cross. The Cross Crosslet extending four crosses instead of four plain arms may

be understood to express in a more forcible manner the universality of Christianity.

The Cross Potent, which is formed of four Tau Crosses held on the arms of a Greek Cross, may be understood to allude to the displacement of the Old Testament Dispensation by the Gospel of Christ.

The Cross Saltire is sometimes used in art as an emblem of martyrdom, but more frequently as an emblem of suffering and humility. In representations of St. Andrew he is usually shown leaning upon or holding the emblem which represents the instrument on which he suffered death.

When St. Andrew was condemned to die the awful death of crucifixion, he, neglecting to pray for life, requested to be nailed to a cross of a different form from that upon which Christ suffered, in true humility believing himself, even in his martyrdom, unworthy to approach the likeness of his Redeemer's crucifixion. Thus the Cross, which bears St. Andrew's name, has become the emblem of humility in suffering. It is generally plain, as shown in Fig. 6, Plate IV.; but if intended more particularly to express suffering, its members may be pointed as those of the Latin Cross in Fig. 2.

All the forms of the symbol of which we have just spoken are of a severe and unornamental character as befits them, alluding as they do to the sorrows and sufferings of our Redeemer, or to Christianity while under the iron hand of persecution. We have now to describe those symbols which are intended to express religion, the Religion of the Cross, glorious and triumphant, growing like a goodly tree, and spreading abroad its branches to the comfort of all who seek their shelter.

The three Crosses, Figs. 10, 11, and 12, Plate IV., and the one in the centre of Plate I., having their arms bursting into ornament, have been devised to set forth Christianity full of life and fruit-yielding—glorious and triumphant over sin and persecution—loved and cherished upon the earth.

The devices of Christian artists have not stopped here; they have gone farther in their desire to express the glory and triumph of the Cross, and have elaborated the sacred symbol into one mass of rich ornament. They have carved it in spotless ivory; they have wrought it in silver and gold, and they have studded it with costly jewels, or coloured it with brilliant enamels, and, still not content, they have wreathed it with garlands of lovely flowers. Instead of a "crown of thorns"

they have decked it with the celestial diadem, and have placed it in the centre of a circle of glittering rays. As Christianity is the fountain of all that is bright and goodly in human thoughts and actions, artists have made the Cross Triumphant the centre of a material glory, to remind us that, as all animated creation looks to the sun, our souls must look for light and life to that which is the centre of all spiritual radiance, the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Monograms of the Saviour's Name.

NUMEROUS monograms have been devised by the early Christian artists to express or set forth the sacred names of our Blessed Lord; and they have been adopted and held in great favour by the Church throughout all its ages. At the present day the monograms of our Saviour's name are more frequently used than any of the other Christian symbols, perhaps with the exception of the Cross.

In almost all the various monograms the form of

the Cross is introduced with more or less distinctness: indeed it appears to have been an important point with artists that such should be the case.

The earliest monogram with which we are acquainted is that which expresses the name of CHRIST in Greek (ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ) by the use of the two first letters of that name (ΧΡ) combined together, as in Fig. 2, Plate V.

Examples of this monogram have been found, supposed to be of a date as early as the second century. They are found in the catacombs, carved on the tombs of the Christians, or painted, in rude fresco, on the walls.

Several forms of the monogram exist, differing slightly from each other. Eight varieties are shown on Plate V.

Fig. 2 represents the most common form, and it is said to be the sign which Constantine beheld in the Heavens while, on the eve of his great battle with Maxentius, he lay pondering on the chances and effects of the coming strife, which was to decide who was to rule the world. The legend says, that a vision appeared unto him, and the heavens opened and displayed the sign written in fire, with an inscription informing him that with it he should conquer. The Emperor at once

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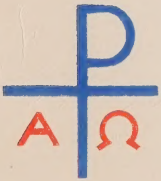

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arose and caused the monogram to be wrought upon his banners and carried to the battle. He afterwards embraced the religion of Christ, and, in remembrance of his deliverance from defeat and death, he stamped the sacred monogram on his coins.

Another form is represented in Fig. 3, where the Χ (*Chi*) is placed with one member upright and the other horizontal, making a Greek Cross: the loop of the Ρ (*Rho*) is added to the upright member of the Χ. The Α and Ω are frequently associated with this and the previous form, as shown here.

Fig. 4 shows a variety of the monogram which is sometimes met with, although not so frequently as the preceding. In it the Ρ is omitted and the letter Ι (*Iota*) is coupled with the Χ. This form of the sacred monogram is more complete and expressive than those forms which consist of the Χ and Ρ; for while they only express the name of CHRIST by the use of the two first letters of that name, the present form sets forth JESUS CHRIST by combining the initial letters of that holy name in Greek (**ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ**). Fig. 5 is another form of the monogram in which a horizontal bar is added to the Ι for the purpose of presenting a Cross. Fig. 6 is a similar

monogram, with the further addition of the loop of the P to one of the arms of the X.

Fig. 7 is the same form as that shown in Fig. 3, with the addition of the Latin letter N, which is generally understood to signify the word NOSTER. The monogram thus signifies, as is stated by M. Didron, "XRISTOS NOSTER," which by extension may be understood as expressing "Our Lord Jesus Christ."*

We sometimes find the above forms of the monogram enclosed in circles, which were doubtless added to express the perfect nature of Christ or His eternal existence (Figs. 8 and 9).

It is somewhat surprising that all the monograms

* In connexion with this subject M. Didron gives the following note, which explains the peculiarity to be observed in the last described monogram, viz., the union of a Latin letter with others purely Greek—"These monograms were of Greek origin, but the Latins did not abandon them, or modify them according to the form of the Roman letters, until a very late period. In the catacombs and early mosaics, the monograms of Christ and of the Virgin are in Greek letters—IC̃, XC̃, and M̃P, Θ̃Y. The alpha and omega have continued in use in this country down to the present day. The name of Christ was written in Latin at Chartres, in the thirteenth century; but the first two letters are Greek, the third and fourth might be either Greek or Latin, and the two last are exclusively Latin, XPITVS. The first sigma is omitted. Here the monogram of Christ is Greek, while that of the adjective, *noster*, is Latin."—"Christian Iconography," p. 394.

of our Saviour's name which have been devised by Christian artists are of Greek origin; and that, although they have been adopted and freely used in all ages by the Latin Church, they have, for the most part, retained their original forms or arrangement, and in all cases their original signification.

We have alluded to those early monograms which are composed of the two first letters of the name of CHRIST, and also to those which display the two initials of the name of JESUS CHRIST, united or combined into single figures. It now remains for us to describe those which partake more of the character of contractions than monograms.

It was very usual for the Greek artists to set forth the names of our Lord by using the first and last letters of those names together, with the sign of contraction placed over them, thus: ΙC stood for JESUS, the Ι (*Iota*) and C (the ancient *Sigma*), being the first and last letters of IHCOYC; and, again, ΧC stood for CHRIST, the Χ (*Chi*) and C being the first and last letters of XPICTOC. These contractions are shown on Plate VI., Figs. 2 and 3.

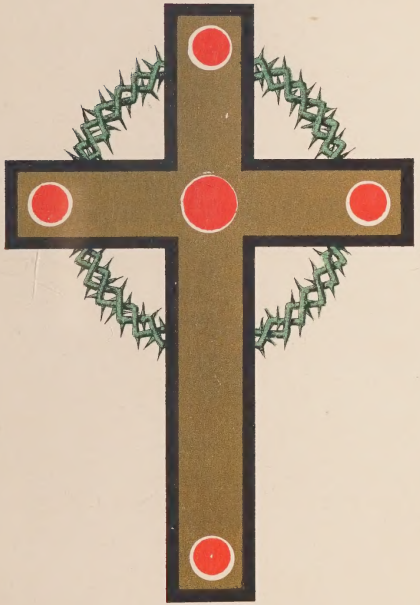
On the same Plate are shown two forms of the monogram now most commonly used. This monogram

is of the same nature as those last described, being, rightly speaking, a contraction, although it is often gracefully wrought into a monogram (Fig. 7).

When it appears in its original form, as a contraction, it usually has the sign of contraction placed over it (Fig. 4). Western artists have altered the original Greek letters into those in use in their country and time, and, retaining the sign of contraction, they have made it intersect the upper member of the H (*Eta*), and by this simple means form the beloved Cross (Figs. 6 and 7).

The monogram in all cases is simply the two first letters and the last letter of the name of JESUS in Greek (IHσουC), the other three letters being omitted.

The monogram is commonly stated to consist of the *first three* letters of the name; but this is obviously an incorrect idea, for when the contraction for the name of CHRIST appears in art, it is either as above (X̄C, Fig. 2), or consisting of three letters, namely XP̄C, which are the two first letters and the final letter of XPιστοC, the remaining four being left out (Fig. 5). Both these contractions (in Greek art) frequently appear in the same composition side by side, as in our Plate, and read "JESUS CHRIST:" and they are both contracted in the same manner.



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CHAPTER IV.

Emblems of the Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension.

HAVING, in as concise a manner as possible, treated of the Symbols and Emblems of God, and of the Cross and the various Monograms of our Saviour's name, it is our intention, in the present Chapter, to describe the Emblems which have been adopted in Christian Art to set forth our Lord's Agony, Betrayal, and Crucifixion; His glorious Resurrection and Ascension.

Emblems of the Passion.

UNDER the head of the Emblems of the Passion are included all those which speak of our Saviour's

Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane; His Betrayal by Judas; His Sufferings while in the hands of the Soldiers, and His Death upon the Cross.

The only Emblem of the Agony with which we are acquainted, is a Cup, doubtless used in direct allusion to our Lord's own words,* from whence the authority for its adoption as an emblem is derived.

When the Cup is used in art to signify the Agony of Christ, it should either have a Calvary Cross or the Cross of Suffering painted on its side, or issuing from it, as shown in Plate VII., Fig. 1. The latter form is depicted in a painting of the Agony by Gaudenzio Ferrari,† where, however, it is wrongly used, being borne by the Ministering Angel. We may here remark that in actual representations of our Saviour's Agony in the Garden, the Cup should by no means be introduced. It is only a literal interpretation of the figurative words of our Lord, and as such should only be used alone and as an emblem.

The Emblems of the Betrayal are eight in number; namely, the Sword, the Club, the Lantern, the Torch,

* St. Matt. xxvi. 39, 42. St. Mark xiv. 36. St. Luke xxii. 42. St. John xviii. 11.

† Engraved in "The History of our Lord," vol. ii. p. 29.

the Ear, the Rope, the Thirty Pieces of Silver, and the Head of Judas.

All these are derived from the different descriptions of the Betrayal to be found in the Gospels.

In Plate VII., Figs. 2 and 3, are shown the most important of the above emblems arranged on shields.

The emblems of our Lord's Condemnation and Sufferings while in the Common Hall are seven in number; namely, the Basin and Ewer (used by Pilate), the Rope, the Pillar (to which Jesus was bound), the Scourge, the Scarlet or Purple Robe, the Crown of Thorns, and the Reed.

Two groups of these emblems are shown in Plate VII., Figs. 4 and 5.

We sometimes find a cock in the act of crowing, introduced with the above; but as it directly alludes to Peter's denial, it cannot rightly be classed with the emblems which are particularly connected with Christ's sufferings.

Of all the emblems of the Passion, those which speak of our Lord's Death are the most important. The principal emblem of the Crucifixion is the Cross, which, as we have already devoted the greater part of a chapter to its description, we need not again dwell

upon. The other emblems are the Nails (three in number), the Hammer, the Pincers, the Ladder, the Sponge and Reed, the Spear, the Inscription,* the Seamless Garment, and the three Dice.

Three groups of these emblems are shown on Plate VII., Figs. 6, 7, 8.

The Pelican is sometimes used as an emblem of the Crucifixion, and as such, is depicted shedding its blood for the good of its young, which cluster around it to feed upon the precious drops.

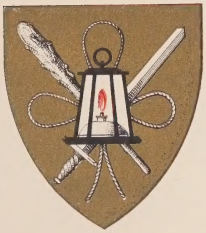
The Brazen Serpent raised upon the Tau Cross was frequently adopted in mediæval times to set forth the Crucifixion. And the other Old Testament types of our Saviour, the slaying of the Paschal Lamb and the marking of the doors of the houses with its blood, and the Sacrifice of Isaac, were also adopted as emblems of Christ's Death upon the Cross.

In a page of the "Biblia Pauperum," a work of the 14th century, we find a drawing of the Crucifixion occupying the centre, and on the right a

* The inscription which was placed over our Lord's head upon the cross, when used as an emblem, appears as four letters, thus:— I.N.R.I. The letters are the initials of *Iesus Nazarenus Rex Judæorum*, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.

PLATE VII.

1



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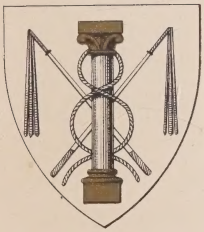

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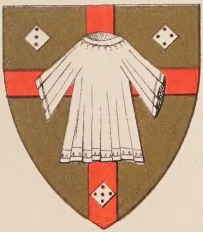

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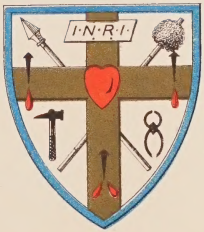


8

representation of the raising of the Brazen Serpent in the Wilderness, and on the left a representation of the offering up of Isaac.*

Emblems of the Resurrection.

AS might be expected, the early Christian Artists did not fail to adopt some objects from the world around them, to set forth the fact of our Lord's Resurrection from the Dead; and Symbolism would indeed be incomplete if the doctrine of the Resurrection remained without its appropriate emblems.

That it was found a difficult task to find expressive emblems we cannot doubt, seeing that those which were adopted derived the qualities that fitted them to act as images principally from fables, or beliefs held on the faith of mere statements made by those who were understood to be learned.

The emblems most generally accepted are the Lion, the Phœnix, the Peacock, and the Pelican.

* An engraving of this page is given in "The History of our Lord," vol. i. p. 28.

The Lion was adopted because it was believed, on the statement of the old naturalists, that it was always born dead, or in a state of complete torpor, having all the appearance of death; but that, in the space of three days, it was endowed with life or awakened to vitality by the breath, the tongue, or the roaring voice of its sire.

In an ancient stained glass window in the Cathedral of Bourges, where a representation of the Resurrection of Christ is depicted, the fable of the Lion is introduced along with three other images of the event—the Raising of the Daughter of Jairus, the Fable of the Pelican, and the Deliverance of Jonah from the Whale. The Lion is shown breathing upon the cub, which lies upon its back on the ground as if dead: underneath are inscribed the words "LEO FORM."

The Phœnix was adopted as a Christian emblem at a very early period, representations of it having been found in the Catacombs. The ancient fable, which stated that the Phœnix, after having been burned to death, rose again in life and vigour from its ashes, doubtless caused it to be accepted as an emblem of the Resurrection of our Lord, and as an image of the great doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body from the Dead.

The Peacock was adopted in early times as an

emblem of the Resurrection, because it yearly renewed its beautiful plumage, and sometimes as an emblem of Immortality, because it was commonly believed to have incorruptible flesh. The use of the Peacock with its tail fully displayed, as an emblem of Pride and Worldly Pomp, is an introduction of a later age.

The Pelican, although it is generally accepted as an emblem of the Blood-shedding of Christ upon the Cross, or as a figure of Christ Himself,* has at times been used to set forth the Resurrection. The belief that it brought its young to life by the blood of its breast caused its adoption in the latter case; and the other and more common opinion that it merely fed its young with its own blood, inclined artists to use it as a figure of Christ and His great sacrifice for us.

The Emblem of the Ascension.

THE only emblem of the Ascension of our Lord with which we are acquainted is the Eagle, usually depicted in the act of flying upwards.

* See p. 40, *ante.*

We meet with several instances of the use of this emblem, but it is by no means so common in art as those previously spoken of.

In representations of the scene of the Ascension it was usual to introduce only the feet of the Saviour, the upper portion of His body being left out of the composition. In some cases artists have shown foot-prints alone indicating where the Saviour stood previous to His Ascension.

The Ascension has also been set forth by types taken from the Old Testament: these were the Translation of Enoch and the Bearing to Heaven of Elijah in the fiery chariot.

In the "Biblia Pauperum" these types are depicted along with the Ascension.

CHAPTER V.

Symbols of Baptism and the Eucharist.

AS might be expected, Christian artists have not passed over the Holy Mysteries without finding some objects by which they might be set forth symbolically, and ever kept before the minds of the unlearned Christian worshippers.

As early as the days of the Church in the Catacombs we find the Holy Sacrament of Baptism symbolically represented. The most frequent symbol is a fish: it frequently appears upon the tombs of the departed Christians, indicating that they who are buried were baptized into the Church of Christ by water, the only element in which fish can exist.

From these early times, and throughout the whole of the Middle Ages, the Fish retained its signification and continued to be used.

Sometimes three fishes were represented entwined in a triangular fashion : doubtless this was intended to symbolize Baptism under the immediate sanction and blessing of the Divine Trinity (woodcut Fig. 9).

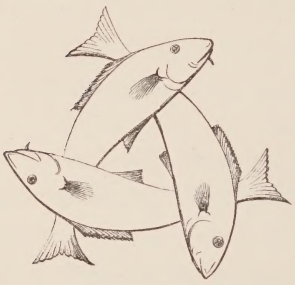


Fig. 9.

Representations of the rite of Baptism, although seldom found in early art, are, nevertheless, very frequent in that of later ages : and it is not unusual to find the Three Persons of the Trinity represented as present (either by symbols or portraitures) for the purpose of indicating that which the early artists expressed more effectively and becomingly by the adoption of the three fishes and the arrangement of them in the triangular form.

Baptism has frequently been set forth by types taken from the Old Testament. We find in the Catacombs a representation of the Passage of the Red Sea, as a type of the holy mystery. This type was retained and very

frequently used during the Middle Ages. It is introduced alongside of the Baptism of Christ in the "Biblia Pauperum."

The passage of the Israelites through the river Jordan, and the vessel of brass, and the washing practised by the Jews before entering the Temple are other types that were used in mediæval times.

Although the symbolical representations of Baptism are rare in art, those which allude to the Holy Eucharist are still more so.

The early symbol, as we find it in the Catacombs, consists of a cup with three small loaves, marked with crosses, placed at its mouth. Later in art the same symbol is used, although slightly altered in general treatment (Plate VII., Fig. 9), appearing as a chalice with the wafer issuing from it, and marked with the monogram or a cross.

A representation of a small altar bearing a chalice and bread, marked with a cross, is at times employed to set forth the Sacrament.

CHAPTER VI.

Symbols and Emblems of the Evangelists and the Apostles.

IN the earliest ages of the Christian Church symbols were very frequently used to represent the four Evangelists: and from those times until the present day they have been retained and held in great favour and respect by Christian artists.

Few, indeed, are the works of any importance of the Mediæval period, in which the Evangelistic symbols are not in some manner introduced, either by the hand of the carver, the painter, the glass-worker, the enameller, the metal-worker, or the embroiderer. In illuminated copies of the Gospels they usually formed appropriate

enrichments,* and they again appeared on the rich and characteristic bindings of those precious volumes.

On processional and other ornamental crosses they frequently terminated the four members, while a symbol or figure of our Lord occupied the centre or point of junction.

In almost all the portraitures of the Evangelists executed during the early and middle ages, their symbols were associated with them for the purpose of individualizing them.†

The earliest and most primitive symbols of the four Evangelists with which we are acquainted are those found in the Catacombs; namely, the four Scrolls, the four Open Books, and the four Rivers. The scrolls and books are precisely the same in idea, setting forth the Evangelists by their writings, the four Holy Gospels. A beautiful specimen, from a painting in the Catacombs, is

* Interesting drawings of the Evangelistic symbols, enclosed in circles, are to be found in the "Book of Kells," a MS. preserved in Trinity College, Dublin.

† In the "Gospels of St. Cuthbert," or the "Durham Book," a beautiful MS., preserved in the British Museum, four interesting miniatures of the Evangelists occur. Each Evangelist is attended by his proper symbol. Each of the creatures bears a book, and wears the nimbus.

shown in the accompanying woodcut (Fig. 10). The four books, enclosed in circular aureoles, are placed between the arms of a Greek Cross, which spread at their extremities as if to clasp them. The whole is surrounded by a circle symbolical of eternity. The Cross sets forth our Blessed Lord, and the open Books the four Evangelists. An ornamental treatment of this beautiful group is depicted in Plate I., where the names of the Evangelists are written on their respective volumes.

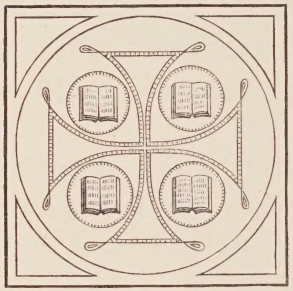


Fig. 10.

The symbolic rivers were very frequently depicted by the early artists, both in sculptures and mosaics. In the Catacombs we find the four rivers shown issuing from a small mount on which a lamb, invested with the inscribed nimbus, stands. The Lamb symbolizes our blessed Lord; the Mount, the Church of Christ, the Mountain of God's House; and the Rivers, the four Evangelists.

The four rivers of Paradise, Gihon, Tigris, Euphrates, and Pison, which were divided to irrigate the garden, evidently supplied the typical streams under which the

Evangelists and their Holy Gospels are figured—the streams of love and mercy ever flowing through and refreshing the garden of the Church on Earth.

Symbolism represents St. Matthew by the river Gihon, St. Mark by the river Tigris, St. Luke by the river Euphrates, and St. John by the river Pison.

In the mosaics of the early churches the symbolic streams are frequently to be met with. In a mosaic in the Tribune of St. John Lateran, in Rome, the four flowing rivers are shown issuing from a mount which bears aloft a large ornamented cross, the symbol of Christ.

The symbols of the Evangelists which are most frequently met with, and which have ever been most in favour with Christian artists, are the four winged living creatures.

They are the winged Man, the winged Lion, the winged Ox, and the Eagle, and are taken from the Vision of Ezekiel and the Revelation of St. John.

At what date these mysterious creatures were adopted to symbolize the Evangelists is uncertain; but they appear to have been used at a very early period, for the most part collectively and with a general application.

About the 5th century they began to appear in art

separately and individualized, and from that time were used without intermission until Christian art died out, carrying with it Symbolism and all else that was true and beautiful within its range.

The writings of St. Jerome, in the beginning of the 5th century, gave to artists authority for the appropriation of the four creatures to the Evangelists. To St. Matthew was given the creature in human likeness, because he commences his holy Gospel with the human generation of Christ; and because in his writings the human nature of our Lord is more dwelt upon than the divine. The creature in the form of a Lion was given to St. Mark, because, in his Gospel, he sets forth the royal dignity of our Lord, and His power manifested in His Resurrection from the Dead. St. Mark dwells upon the Resurrection of Christ and thereby claims the Lion, which, as we have before shown, was accepted in early times as a symbol of the Resurrection. He also opens his Gospel with the mission of John the Baptist. "The voice of one crying in the wilderness," is appropriately figured by the Lion, whose roaring voice is heard in wilds and deserts. The creature in the form of an Ox was given to St. Luke, because, in his Gospel, he particularly dwells on the Atonement and the Priesthood of our Lord. The Ox,

the beast of sacrifice, fitly sets forth the sacred office and also the atonement for sin by blood.

The creature in the form of an Eagle was given to St. John, because, as the Eagle soars on its powerful wings high towards heaven, he soared in the spirit upwards to the heaven of heavens to contemplate the Divine nature of Christ and to bring back to earth revelations of sublime and awful mysteries.

The above particulars relative to the Evangelistic symbols are distinctly set forth in the beautiful hymn, "Jucundare, plebs fidelis," written by Adam of St. Victor in the 12th century. The following translation by the Rev. J. M. Neale, we transcribe from his "Mediæval Hymns and Sequences."

"CHILDREN of a Heavenly FATHER,
Faithful people, joy, the rather
That the Prophet's lore ye gather,
From Ezekiel's Vision draw.
John that Prophet's witness sharing,
In the Apocalypse declaring,
'This I write, true record bearing
Of the things I truly saw.'

"Round the Throne, 'midst Angel natures
Stand four holy Living Creatures,
Whose diversity of features
Maketh good the Seer's plan:

This an Eagle's visage knoweth:
That a Lion's image showeth:
Scripture on the rest bestoweth
The twin forms of Ox and Man.

"These are they, the symbols mystic
Of the forms Evangelistic,
Who the Church, with streams majestic,
Irrigate from sea to sea:
Matthew first, and Mark the second:
Luke with these is rightly reckoned:
And the loved Apostle, beckoned
From his nets and Zebedee.

"Matthew's form the man supplieth,
For that thus he testifieth
Of the LORD, that none denieth
Him to spring from man He made;
Luke's the ox, in form propitial,
As a creature sacrificial,
For that he the rites judicial
Of Mosaic law displayed.

"Mark the wilds as lion shaketh,
And the desert hearing quaketh,
Preparation while he maketh
That the heart with GOD be right:
John, love's double wing devising,
Earth on eagle plumes despising,
To his GOD and LORD uprising
Soars away in purer light.

"Symbols quadriform uniting
They of CHRIST are thus inditing;

Quadriform His acts, which writing
They produce before our eyes:
Man,—Whose birth man's law obeyeth:
Ox,—Whom victim's passion slayeth:
Lion,—when on death He preyeth:
Eagle,—soaring to the skies.

"These the creature forms ethereal
Round the majesty imperial
Seen by prophets; but material
Difference 'twixt the visions springs.
Wheels are rolling,—wings are flying,—
Scripture lore this signifying;—
Step with step, as wheels, complying,
Contemplation by the wings.

"Paradise is satiated,
Blossoms, thrives, is fœcundated,
With the waters irrigated
From these rills that aye proceed:
CHRIST the fountain, they the river,
CHRIST the source, and they the giver
Of the streams that they deliver
To supply His people's need.

"In these streams our souls bedewing,
That more fully we ensuing
Thirst of goodness and renewing,
Thirst more fully may allay:
We their holy doctrine follow
From the gulf that gapes to swallow,
And from pleasures vain and hollow
To the joys of heavenly Day."

The order in which the Evangelistic symbols are enumerated in the above Poem (in the fourth, fifth, and sixth verses), although not the same as that in which the Evangelistic writings are arranged according to the canon, is the order commonly adopted in art.

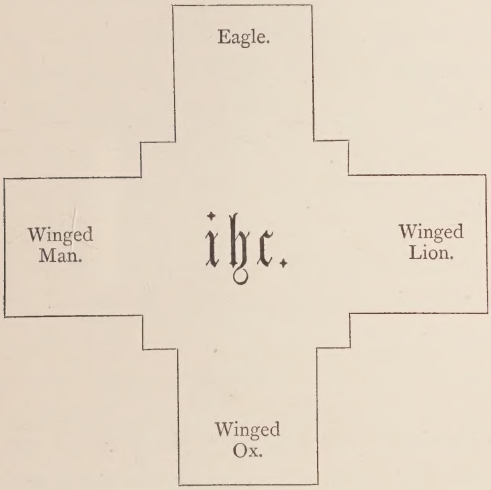
As the four symbols are considered, apart from their allusion to the Evangelists, to be typical of the four great events in the life of our Lord, viz. the Incarnation, the Passion, the Resurrection, and the Ascension, they are generally arranged in the proper order of those events, thus :—

Symbol.	Winged Man.	Winged Ox.	Winged Lion.	Eagle.
Evangelist.	St. Matthew.	St. Luke.	St. Mark.	St. John.
Event.	Incarnation.	Passion.	Resurrection.	Ascension.

When the symbols are placed at the corners of a square or parallelogram, such as an altar frontal, a monumental brass, or a book-cover, they are most properly arranged in the following order :—

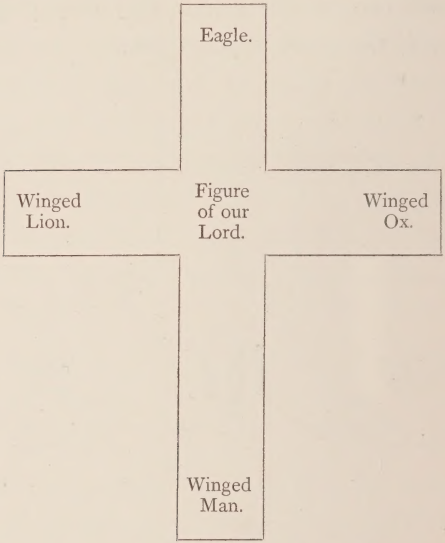
Winged Man.	Eagle.
Winged Lion.	Winged Ox.

When they are depicted at the extremities of the four members of a cross, in which a figure, symbol, or monogram of our Lord, occupies the centre, they may properly be arranged as in the accompanying figure.



This arrangement, however, is by no means binding on the artist, for considerable difference exists in ancient examples.

The symbols on the great crucifix in the Cathedral of Minden are placed thus :—



The Crucifix,* just alluded to, is of rather too late a date to act as an important authority, yet it serves to show that artists have never positively decided upon the correct position or arrangement of the Evangelistic symbols on the most important of all objects which admit of their use, the Cross.

* A drawing of this Crucifix is given in "Gothic Architecture of the Middle Ages," by Statz & Ungewitter, Plate 192.

Several different forms of the mystical creatures have been devised by the early and mediæval artists. Those which display the entire forms of the Man, the Lion, the Ox, and the Eagle, all winged and invested with the nimbus, appear to have been most frequently adopted. In some representations of the symbols, while the Lion, Ox, and Eagle are fully shown, the Man is depicted as a half-figure. This is the case in the set enamelled on the knop of a beautiful chalice preserved in the church of St. Maurice, at Hildesheim.* Outline drawings of this set are given in Plate VIII. Figs. 6, 7, 8, and 9.

The symbols are frequently to be met with formed of the heads of the mystical creatures on bodies, or half-bodies, in the human shape, as shown in the four drawings on Plate VIII. Figs. 2, 3, 4, and 5, which are taken from the wonderful bronze Font in the Cathedral of Hildesheim.†

* Illustrated in "The Study-book of Mediæval Architecture and Art," by Thomas H. King. Vol. ii. Plate 70.

† Our illustrations are taken from the interesting engravings of the Font given in King's "Study-book of Mediæval Architecture and Art," which also contains the following complete description. We transcribe it here, believing that, as it illustrates the great attention paid by mediæval artists to Christian symbolism, it will not be without interest to our readers :—

"It is both wrought upon the true principles of metal-work, and

At other times we find the symbols comprising only the heads and wings of the four creatures.

In all cases the heads of the mystic animals should be

designed with the highest religious sentiment, as embodied in the symbolism which distinguished the age when these masterpieces were achieved.

The basin is circular in form, and rests on a cylindrical column, sustained by four eagle's claws. Four kneeling figures, holding in their hands an urn, from which escapes a stream of water, support the basin underneath. These figures represent the four rivers which watered the Garden of Eden, and which the Fathers have always regarded as figurative of this Sacrament. That there might be no mistake as to this symbolism, the under rim of the basin is inscribed with the following Latin verses :—

✠ Os . Mutans . Phison . est . prudenti . simulatus.
✠ Temperiem . Geon . terrae . delignat . hiatus.
✠ Est . velox . Tigris . quo . fortis . significatur.
✠ Frugifer . Euphrates . est . justitia . que . notatur.

Above this inscription, and precisely over the heads of the four figures, in farther illustration of the idea, the four cardinal virtues are typified in four allegorical medallions. Prudence is represented as a woman crowned, holding in her right hand a book and in her left a serpent, with a label bearing the following motto,—Estote . prudentes . sicut . serpentes. Temperance is represented by a figure holding a vase, from which water is escaping, with the motto,—Omne . tulit . punctum . qui . miscuit . utile . dulci. Fortitude appears under the form of a warrior in steel armour, armed with sword and shield. On the shield are the arms of the Donor; on a scroll is the legend,—Vir . qui . dominatur . animo . suo . fortior . est . expugnatore . urbis. And Justice is shown under the familiar image of a crowned female, bandaged, holding a balance. The legend on her scroll runs thus,—Omnia . in . mensura . et . pondere . pono.

Above these medallions are four foliated ogee arches on slender shafts, holding in the spandrils four medallions of the greater prophets, each with

invested with the plain nimbus, but in late art we frequently find it omitted.

We sometimes find the four creatures united together

a motto. On the bust of Isaiah we read—Egredietur . virgo . de . radice . Jesse . ; on that of Jeremiah—Regnabit . rex . et . sapiens . erit . ; on that of Daniel—Omnes . populi . et . tribus . et . linguæ . ipsi . servient . ; and on that of Ezekiel—Similitudo . animalium . et . hic . aspectus . eorum . The remainder of the spaces in the spandrils is occupied by the emblems of the Evangelists, also with mottoes, as follows :—St. Matthew—Ipse . salvum . faciet . populum . suum . a . peccatis . eorum . ; St. Mark—Ipse . vos . baptizabit . in . speritus . sancto . et . igne . ; St. Luke—Dabit . illi . Dominus . sedem . David . patui . ejus . ; St. John—Verbum . caro . factum . est .

The spaces within the four ogees are occupied by the following subjects :—

In the first, the Blessed Virgin is sitting enthroned, with the Divine Infant in her arms: on the one side St. Gothard, on the other St. Stephen. The Donor is kneeling in front holding the scroll—Ave . Maria . gratia . plena . ; with these verses over all :—

✠ Wilbernus . veniæ . spe . dat . laudique . Mariæ
✠ Hoc . decus . ecclesiæ . suscipe . Christe . pie .

In the second, the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea. This and the two other subjects are emblematical of baptism. Here Moses is represented with the rod with which he smote the water in one hand, and the two tables of the law in the other. In passing, it may be observed, that this anachronism, which would never have occurred to the modern artist, gives great vigour to the design, and is very characteristic of the period. Behind the law-giver are a group of twelve personages, with vases, charged with the spoil of the Egyptians. The archivolt above bears the following inscription :—

Per . mare . per . moysen . fugit . Egyptum . genus . horum .
Per . Christum . lavachro . fugimus . tenebras . viciorum .

and forming one mysterious being, called the Tetramorph, with four heads and numerous wings. The drawing given in the centre of Plate VIII. represents the Tetramorph as

In the third, the Baptism of our Lord in the river Jordan. Our Lord is standing up to the middle in water. The holy dove is poised over his head, and the Eternal Father above raises his right hand in benediction, and in the left, bears the words,—Hic . est . filius . meus . dilectus. At the right of our Saviour stands the Baptist, his robe held by two angels as acolytes; and on the archivolt are the words:—

Hic . baptizatur . Christus . quo . sanctificatur .
Nobis . baptisma . tribuens . in . flamine . Chrisma .

In the fourth, is the passage of the Israelites into Canaan through the river Jordan. Joshua is pointing the way with his lance, followed by the twelve priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant, and each holding a stone in his hand. In the archivolt the words:—

Ad . patriam . Josue . duce . flumen . transit . habæus .
Ducimur . ad . vitam . te . duce . fonte . Deus .

The whole is encircled above with a band, on which are engraved these verses:—

✠ Quatuor irrorant . Paradisi . flumina . mundum .
✠ Virtutes . que . rigant . totidem . cor . crimine . mundum .
✠ Ora . prophetarum . quæ . baticinata . fuerunt .
✠ Hæc . rata . scriptores . evangelii . cecinerunt . ✠

The cover is hung from the roof of the Church by a counterweight, a chain passing over a pulley. On a band round the part which fits into the font are the lines:—

✠ Mundat . ut . immunda . sacri . baptismatis . unda .
Sic . juste . fusus . sanguis . lavachri . tenet . usus .
Post . lavat . attracta . lachrymis . confessio . facta .
Crimine . fædatis . lavachrum . fit . opus . pietatis .

PLATE VIII.

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rendered in Greek art; it is taken from a Byzantine Mosaic in the Convent of Vatopedi, on Mount Athos.* The principal figure is that of the Man, the three heads of the

which refer to the remission of sins, first in Baptism, whether by water or by blood, and afterwards in the Sacrament of Penance.

Above this inscription the cover is divided into four compartments, corresponding with the four divisions of the font itself. These compartments are similarly formed of foliated arches or shafts. They are filled with the following subjects:—

In the first is the affirmation of Aaron's supremacy in the priesthood by the miracle of the budding rod. On an altar, Aaron's rod, of the tribe of Levi, is shown in blossom above the rods of the other tribes. On the left is Aaron, with an ewer in his hand; on the right is Moses, with a staff in his right hand and a label in his left, which carries these words—Prophetam . suscitabit . de . filiis . vestris. On the archivolt is the inscription:—

Virga . viget . flore . parit . alma . regente . pudore .

In the second is the Massacre of the Innocents. King Herod is represented sitting on a throne, and giving orders for the massacre; a drawn sword is held by an attendant by his side. An executioner cutting off the head of an infant, and a mother with a child at her heart, complete the picture. Above is the inscription:—

Quos . dolor . ortentat . cruor . a . crudele . cruentat .

In the third is St. Mary Magdalene at the feet of Jesus. Our Saviour is sitting at table between Lazarus and Simon the Pharisee, with the penitent wiping His feet with her hair. The words of the Pharisee are written on a scroll in his hand—Hic . si . esset . Propheta . sciret . utique . qualis . et . quæ . est . mulier . quæ . tangit . eum. Our Lord's words are in

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* Our drawing is copied from one in the valuable work by M. Didron, to which we have frequently directed attention.

other creatures apppearing from behind, and six large wings covered with eyes are arranged round the heads and across the body of the Man, whose feet rest on fiery wheels which are also winged. All the heads are invested with plain nimbi.

like manner inscribed on the label which he holds—Remittuntur . ei . peccata . . multa. On the archivolt is the inscription :—

Spe . reficit . pectus . lachrymis . a . flente . refectus .

In the fourth, the Six Works of Mercy. A crowned figure, representing Mercy, is supposed to be giving drink to the thirsty, feeding the hungry, entertaining the stranger, clothing the naked, attending the sick, and visiting the prisoner; each of which states is represented by an appropriate figure. The burial of the dead is omitted; but these are the Six Works of Mercy referred to by our Lord in His Parable, St. Matthew, xxv. :—*Esurivi et dedistis mihi manducare—Sitivi et dedistis mihi bibere—Hospes eram et collegistis me—Nudus et operuistis me—Infirmus et visitastis me—In carcere eram et venistis ad me.* Above is the legend :—

Dat . veniam . sceleri . per . opes . inopem . misereri .

The spandrils are occupied by the busts of Solomon, Jeremiah, David, and Isaiah, each bearing a motto.

For Solomon :—Flores . mei . fructus . honoris . et . honestatis.

For Jeremiah :—Vox . in . Rama . audita . ploratus . et . ululatus . Rachelis . plorantis . filios . suos.

For David :—Cibavit . nos . pane . lachrymarum . et . potum . dedit . nobis . in . lachrymis.

For Isaiah :—Frange . esurienti . panem . tuum . et . egenos . vagosque . induc . in . domum . tuam.

The cover terminates above in a knot of foliage of exquisite beauty * * * The execution dates probably from the latter half of the thirteenth century."

In the earliest ages of the Church, the Twelve Apostles of our Lord were symbolically represented as twelve sheep. These usually had a lamb in their midst, which, being invested with a nimbus and sometimes elevated above them, was evidently intended to symbolize Christ. Our Saviour was at times represented among the sheep as a shepherd (the Good Shepherd) bearing a lamb in his arms. Artists next represented the Apostles as twelve men attended by twelve sheep, associating the symbol with the portraiture, as was frequently done in representations of the Evangelists. Still later the Apostles were depicted as twelve venerable men, without the sheep, but bearing books or scrolls in their hands to set forth their sacred mission as teachers of the truths of Christianity, as bearers of the written Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Towards the latter part of the sixth century, it became usual for artists to represent the Apostles with particular emblems or attributes in their hands. These, being derived from circumstances or events in their lives or martyrdoms, supplied the means of readily distinguishing or individualizing them whether depicted together or apart.

These emblems, as well as being used in connexion with the portraitures of the Apostles, were very frequently depicted alone in the same manner as other emblems or

symbols. For instance, the Keys of St. Peter, the Sword of St. Paul, and the Cross of St. Andrew.

It is usual, in alluding to the Apostles, to speak of *the Twelve*, because that was their number while our Lord was upon earth, although afterwards their number increased.

We find that when the Apostles are represented together in art, while their number is always twelve, the same persons are not in all cases depicted, selection being made from the extended list.

According to the canon of the Mass, the Apostles are thirteen in number, and stand in order as follows :— St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Andrew, St. James the Great, St. John, St. Thomas, St. James the Less, St. Philip, St. Bartholomew, St. Matthew, St. Simon, St. Jude, and St. Matthias.

When twelve are selected from the above list, St. Jude is commonly left out to admit St. Paul. In cases where the Evangelists are depicted, St. Simon and St. Matthias are omitted. It appears to have been usual in Greek art to omit St. James the Less, St. Jude, and St. Matthias, and to insert St. Paul, St. Luke, and St. Mark. We find this arrangement noted in the "Guide de la Peinture," the Greek manual on painting published by M. Didron.

On a pulpit preserved in the Cathedral of Troyes the Apostles are arranged thus :—St. Matthew, St. Philip, St. Mark, St. Paul, St. Peter, St. Luke, St. Andrew, St. Thomas, St. Simon, St. Bartholomew, St. James, St. John. This is purely in accordance with the Greek formula.* We accordingly find the Latin and Greek arrangements to stand as follows :—

Latin.	Greek.
St. Peter.	St. Matthew.
St. Paul.	St. Philip.
St. Andrew.	St. Mark.
St. James the Great.	St. Paul.
St. John.	St. Peter.
St. Thomas.	St. Luke.
St. James the Less.	St. Andrew.
St. Philip.	St. Thomas.
St. Bartholomew.	St. Simon.
St. Matthew.	St. Bartholomew.
St. Simon.	St. James the Great.
St. Matthias.	St. John.

The emblems of St. Peter are the Keys derived

* For the matter regarding the arrangement, &c., of the Twelve Apostles we are indebted to Mrs. Jameson's valuable "Sacred and Legendary Art."

from our Lord's words to that apostle:—"I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (St. Matt. xvi. 29.) In very early art one key is sometimes found represented in the hand of St. Peter, but the most usual number is two,

Fig. 11.

supposed to symbolize the key of heaven and the key of hell. As many as three have been used, symbolizing, in addition to the keys of heaven and hell, the key of this world. When used as emblems of the Apostle, the keys should be two in number (Fig. 11), one represented as of gold and the other as of silver.

The usual emblem of St. Paul is a sword, the instrument of his martyrdom (Fig. 12). He was beheaded near Rome. St. Paul is frequently depicted bearing the sword in one hand and a book in the other. Very rarely he is shown bearing two swords. We may remark that most generally when the Apostles are represented in art, they are depicted with books in their hands as well as with their emblems.

Fig. 12.

The books are attributes given them as teachers of the Gospel.

The well-known Cross of St. Andrew is the emblem universally given to that Apostle (Fig. 6, Plate IV.). He is believed to have suffered death upon a cross of that form, as we have already mentioned in a previous chapter.*

The usual emblems of St. James the Great are a pilgrim's staff, scrip, and an escalop-shell (Fig. 13). The staff and scrip are given to him as emblems because he was the first of the Apostles to go forth to foreign lands to fulfil the sacred mission. The escalop-shell is generally supposed to allude to the countless pilgrimages which were made to his celebrated shrine at Compostella.

Fig. 13.

The emblem of St. John, as an Apostle, is a cup with a serpent issuing from it (Fig. 14). The legend states that on one occasion the chalice which St. John was about to use was secretly poisoned, and that he drank of it and administered it without injury, the poison having miraculously issued from it in the form of a serpent.

Fig. 14.

* On the Cross; *see* p. 75, ante.

The usual emblem of St. Thomas is a builder's rule or square (Fig. 15), but sometimes he bears the instrument of his martyrdom, a lance or javelin. He is stated to have been martyred in India by being transfixed with numerous darts, and finally run through the body with a lance.

Fig. 15.

The first-mentioned emblem appears to have originated through a beautiful and popular legend regarding St. Thomas, which we transcribe here :—

"When St. Thomas was at Cesarea, our Lord appeared to him and said :—'The king of the Indies, Gondoforus, hath sent his provost Abanes to seek for workmen well versed in the science of architecture, who shall build for him a palace finer than that of the Emperor of Rome. Behold, now, I will send thee to him.' And Thomas went, and Gondoforus commanded him to build for him a magnificent palace, and gave him much gold and silver for the purpose. The king went into a distant country, and was absent for two years; and St. Thomas, meanwhile, instead of building a palace, distributed all the treasures intrusted to him among the poor and sick; and when the king returned, he was full of wrath, and

he commanded that St. Thomas should be seized and cast into prison, and he meditated for him a horrible death. Meantime the brother of the king died, and the king resolved to erect for him a most magnificent tomb; but the dead man, after that he had been dead four days, suddenly arose and sat upright, and said to the king:—'The man whom thou wouldst torture is a servant of God: behold, I have been in Paradise, and the angels showed to me a wondrous palace of gold and silver and precious stones, and they said,—'This is the palace that Thomas the architect hath built for thy brother, king Gondoforus.'' And when the king heard these words, he ran to the prison, and delivered the Apostle; and Thomas said to him, 'Knowest thou not that those who would possess heavenly things, have little care for the things of this earth? There are in heaven rich palaces without number, which were prepared from the beginning of the world for those who purchase the possession through faith and charity. Thy riches, O king, may prepare the way for thee to such a palace, but they cannot follow thee thither.'" *

The emblem of St. James the Less is a club or

* Translated from the "Golden Legend" (*Legenda Aurea*), and cited in Mrs. Jameson's "Sacred and Legendary Art," vol. i. p. 246.

bat, the instrument of his martyrdom (Fig. 16). He was martyred in Jerusalem by being thrown from the top of the temple, but not being killed by the fall, he was afterwards slain with a fuller's bat as he rose on his knees to pray.

Fig. 16.

St. Philip usually bears for his emblem a cross of the Latin type, fastened to the top of a long staff or reed (Fig. 17). Sometimes he is represented with a plain Latin cross in his hands, and at others he carries a Tau cross on the top of a staff. St. Philip is supposed to have been crucified with his head downwards, or to have been bound to a cross, and stoned to death.

Fig. 17.

The emblem universally given to St. Bartholomew is the instrument of his fearful martyrdom, a large knife of peculiar shape (Fig. 18). He is generally supposed to have been flayed alive by order of a king of Armenia, and to have died in horrid tortures. In portraitures, this Apostle always carries the knife, and sometimes, in addition, he is represented with a human skin over his arm.

Fig. 18.

The emblem of St. Matthew, when represented in the capacity of an Apostle, is a purse of money (Fig. 19). This emblem has evidently been given to him in allusion to his vocation previous to his call by our Saviour. How St. Matthew died appears to be uncertain. Greek artists represent him dying a natural death; but Latin, or Western art, shows him dying the death of a martyr, either by the sword or spear.

Fig. 19.

St. Simon bears for his emblem a large saw, which is commonly accepted as the instrument of his martyrdom (Fig. 20). The exact manner of his death and the place where he suffered are both unknown. It is generally supposed, however, that he was sawn asunder, and that his death took place in Persia. St. Jude (or Thaddeus) is said to have attended St. Simon in his travels, and to have suffered with him, being killed by a halberd. St. Jude's emblem is a halberd.

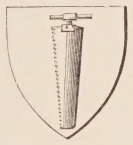

Fig. 20.

The last Apostle in our list, St. Matthias, has for his emblem an axe (Fig. 21), or, as is sometimes the case in portraitures, a spear. St. Matthias taught the

Fig. 21.

Gospel in Judea, and is generally stated to have suffered martyrdom there at the hands of the Jews, who put him to death with one of the above-named weapons, the axe or the spear.

CHAPTER VII.

Emblems and Attributes of the Saints.

IN enumerating the emblems and attributes of the lesser Saints we shall confine ourselves to those of the Anglican Church, and take them in the order in which they stand in the Calendar. We shall omit to mention those Saints who have no distinguishing emblem or attribute.

St. Hilary, *Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor.*—St. Hilary usually has for his emblem three books, alluding to the three works which he wrote against Arianism. Sometimes he is represented treading on reptiles, which are emblematic of the false doctrines and heresies he exposed and overthrew.

St. Prisca, *Virgin and Martyr.*—St. Prisca bears as her emblem a sword, and in portraitures she is at times represented with a lion at her feet. Both allude to her martyrdom. She was beheaded after having been given up to the fury of a lion, which, instead of harming her, humbly crouched at her feet and licked them.

St. Fabian, *Bishop of Rome and Martyr.*—St. Fabian is generally represented in portraitures bearing in his hands a sword and a palm branch, and with a papal crown upon his head. He is sometimes represented with a book instead of a sword.

St. Agnes, *Virgin and Martyr.*—The emblem or attribute of St. Agnes is a spotless lamb, which is either shown at her feet, in her hand, or on a book which she holds. She suffered martyrdom by being beheaded, and therefore, when she is represented as a martyr, she bears a sword and a palm branch.

St. Vincent, *Deacon and Martyr.*—St. Vincent suffered martyrdom by being roasted over a fire on a frame of sharp iron bars; he has for his emblem the instrument of his fearful death, and in portraitures he also bears a palm branch.

St. Blasius, *Bishop and Martyr.*—The peculiar emblem of this Saint is a large sharp iron comb, the

instrument of his martyrdom. In portraitures he is at times represented surrounded by wild animals, which allude to his long life of solitude. In it it is said that the very beasts of the wilderness became accustomed to him and were his companions.

St. Gregory, *Bishop of Rome, Confessor, and Doctor of the Church.*—St. Gregory the Great has no peculiar emblem, but in portraitures he is represented as a Pope with a book in his hand, and a dove on his shoulder. The dove is the symbol of the Holy Spirit, by whom he was inspired.

St. Edward, *King and Martyr.*—The usual emblems of St. Edward are a cup and a dagger, which in portraitures he carries in his hands. He is also shown invested with the usual insignia of royalty. He was murdered by being stabbed in the back while drinking a cup of wine.

St. Benedict, *Abbot.*—St. Benedict is represented with several emblems: he carries an aspergillum, the emblem of purity of life; a cup with a serpent in it, in allusion to the cup of poisoned wine which was given to him by some of his monks; a broken cup, in allusion to the legend which states that when the cup containing poison was given to him, he blessed it with the sign of

the cross, upon which it burst into pieces; a broken sieve; a thorn-bush; and a loaf of bread, broken, and with a serpent crawling from it, or being carried away by a raven. The loaf of bread, in both conditions, alludes to another attempt to take St. Benedict's life by poison.

St. Richard, *Bishop and Confessor.*—The emblem of St. Richard is a chalice containing wine, which is placed on the ground at his feet. This is derived from the legend which informs us that on an occasion, when the Saint was about to administer the Eucharist, he fell and let the chalice drop from his hand, but without any of the wine being spilled, it being preserved in a miraculous manner.

St. Ambrose, *Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor of the Church.*—St. Ambrose is generally represented with a triple scourge in his hand, an emblem given to him in commemoration of his celebrated excommunication of the Emperor Theodosius, for a cruel and unmerciful act of revenge on the inhabitants of Thessalonica. In portraitures he is usually depicted in full pontifical costume, with a beehive near him. It is related that while an infant and asleep, a swarm of bees alighted on his lips, and flew away again without stinging him.

This peculiar event was supposed to prognosticate his future eloquence, and doubtless originated his attribute—the beehive.

St. Alphege, *Archbishop and Martyr.*—St. Alphege bears for his emblem the instrument of his martyrdom—a battleaxe. He suffered at Canterbury by being stoned almost to death, and afterwards beheaded. In portraitures he is frequently depicted with his chasuble full of stones, in allusion to the first part of his martyrdom.

St. George, *Martyr and Patron Saint of England.*—The emblems commonly given to St. George are a dragon, a shield with a red cross upon it, and a spear. The legend from which they are derived is so universally known that we consider it unnecessary to insert it here.

St. Dunstan, *Archbishop and Confessor.*—St. Dunstan has for his emblem a harp and a pair of furnace tongs: the former was given to him because he was a talented musician and an expert harpist; the latter, because he was one of the most skilful metal-workers of his day. He is said to have made, while Archbishop of Canterbury, many of the sacred vessels in use there.

St. Nicomede, *Priest and Martyr.*—St. Nicomede suffered martyrdom by being beaten to death with a club

spiked with iron; and he bears the instrument of his death as his emblem.

St. Boniface, *Archbishop and Martyr.*—The usual emblem of St. Boniface is a book pierced through with a sword. He was slain by the sword, along with a number of companions, while on a mission to the pagan inhabitants of Friesland.

St. Alban, *Proto-martyr of England.*—St. Alban suffered martyrdom by being tortured in a fearful manner and then beheaded. He is generally depicted with a sword, the instrument of his martyrdom, in one hand, and a cross on a tall staff in the other. Sometimes he carries a palm branch instead of the long cross.

St. Margaret, *Virgin and Martyr.*—St. Margaret has for her emblem a dragon, out of the body of which she appears rising, or upon which she is standing and piercing with the shaft of a long cross. Sometimes the dragon is chained and helpless at her feet. The emblem is derived from her legend, which informs us that she was cast into a deep dungeon, where the devil in the shape of a dragon appeared, and endeavoured to frighten her from her faith; but she boldly resisted him, and striking him with the cross she held in her hand, put him to flight. Another version of her legend states that the

dragon swallowed her, and immediately burst and set her free again. When she appears rising from the body of the beast, the latter version of the legend is alluded to.

St. Mary Magdalene.—The peculiar emblem of St. Mary Magdalene is a box, or vase, which is supposed to represent the box of ointment with which she anointed the feet of our Saviour. It has generally been believed by the Western Church that the "sinner" (St. Luke vii. 37), and "Mary," the sister of Lazarus (St. John xi. 2, and xii. 3), and Mary Magdalene are one and the same person.

St. Laurence, *Deacon and Martyr.*—The emblem of St. Laurence is a gridiron, the instrument of his fearful martyrdom. He was bound with chains upon a red-hot frame of iron bars over a slow fire, and roasted to death. In portraitures he frequently carries a book as well as his emblem. The emblem is sometimes depicted large enough for him to lean upon it, and at others small enough for him to hold in his hand, or to be suspended from his neck, after the manner of a pectoral cross.

St. Augustine, *Bishop, Confessor, and Doctor of the Church.*—St. Augustine is usually represented without

any distinguishing attribute, but he sometimes bears in his hand his peculiar emblem, a heart. It is either shown flaming or pierced with arrows; in the former case it alludes to his burning love and zeal for the Christian Faith, and in the latter to the poignancy of his repentance for his early sins.

St. Giles, *Abbot and Confessor.*—The emblem of St. Giles is a hind, generally depicted with its fore feet or its head in his lap, as if seeking protection. The legend of the Saint informs us, that while St. Giles was living the life of a hermit in France, he was fed by the milk of a hind of the forest which lay near his cave; and that he was discovered by a king of the Goths, who, having been hunting, followed the hind to the hermit's cave, where it sought refuge. The king treated the Saint with great reverence, and ultimately built a monastery on the spot to which the hind led him, and made St. Giles the first abbot.

St. Lambert, *Bishop and Martyr.*—The emblem of St. Lambert is a javelin, or dart, the instrument of his martyrdom.

St. Cyprian, *Archbishop and Martyr.*—St. Cyprian usually bears for his emblem a sword. He suffered martyrdom at Carthage by being beheaded.

St. Jerome, *Priest, Confessor, and Doctor of the Church.*—The usual emblem of St. Jerome is a lion, given to him as the emblem of solitude, and in allusion to his life of retirement, contemplation, and lonely study. He sometimes carries a model of a church in his hands, because he was a great and learned defender of the faith and doctrines of the Church.

St. Remigius, *Bishop.*—The emblem of St. Remigius is a dove, with an oil-cruise in its beak. This is derived from his legend, which states that at the anointing of King Clovis a cruise of oil was brought from heaven by a dove, at the prayer of the Saint. In portraitures the dove with the cruise is depicted flying over his head.

St. Faith, *Virgin and Martyr.*—St. Faith has an emblem similar to that of St. Laurence, *i.e.*, a gridiron. At her martyrdom she was cruelly tortured by being half roasted, and then beheaded.

St. Crispin, *Martyr.* — St. Crispin and his brother, St. Crispianus, the patron saints of shoemakers, have for their emblems two implements of their trade, a shoemaker's awl and knife. These Saints are said to have been shoemakers, and to have supplied the poor and destitute without charge. Their legend adds that an

angel supplied them with leather for their charitable task.

St. Britius, *Bishop and Confessor.*—St. Britius has no particular emblem, unless the burning coals, which in portraitures he frequently carries in his hands or garment, can be considered as such. He is said to have proved his innocence of a false charge which was brought against him by carrying blazing coals in his hands or his vestment without sustaining the slightest injury.

St. Hugh, *Bishop and Confessor.*—The emblem of St. Hugh is a swan, which was given to him in allusion to his love of solitude.

St. Edmund, *King and Martyr.*—St. Edmund suffered martyrdom at the hands of the Danes, who, after cruelly torturing him with whips, pierced him with numerous arrows, and lastly beheaded him. His emblem is a group of arrows or short darts.

St. Cecilia, *Virgin and Martyr.*—The most common emblem of St. Cecilia is a small organ, which instrument she is stated to have invented. She is sometimes depicted with organ-pipes only in her hands, and at others with a harp. She is generally acknowledged to be the patroness of ecclesiastical music.

St. Clement, *Bishop and Martyr.*—The emblem of St. Clement is an anchor, given to him in allusion to his great steadfastness and faith in the Gospel, and his unwavering hope and trust in Christ.

St. Catherine, *Virgin and Martyr.*—The universal and well-known emblem of St. Catherine is a wheel armed with knives. She was sentenced to be tortured and cut to pieces between revolving wheels, set with sharp blades, but was rescued from the fearful trial by lightning, which came from heaven and broke the diabolical instrument of torture to pieces, and killed the executioners. She was then taken and beheaded. The wheel was given to her in commemoration of the miraculous interposition of Heaven in her behalf.

St. Nicholas, *Bishop and Confessor.*—The usual emblem of St. Nicholas is a group of three purses of money, or of three golden balls. St. Nicholas is said to have been a very wealthy man, and to have taken great delight in doing good and relieving the poor. One instance of his charity is particularly recorded: he was passing through a town at night, when he was attracted to an humble dwelling, from which proceeded the cries of great distress. The Saint discovered that the place was inhabited by a destitute nobleman and his three

daughters, who, to save themselves from starvation, were resolving to give themselves up to a life of sin; the Saint, touched by their misery, visited their house three nights in succession, and each time dropped in through the window a large bag of gold, with which the father portioned his daughters, and secured for each of them an honourable alliance. It is from this legend that the above emblem of the Saint is derived.

St. Lucy, *Virgin and Martyr.*—St. Lucy has three emblems. The first is a sword, which pierces her neck; this alludes to her martyrdom as described in the early legends. The second is a pair of eyes carried on a dish or book; this emblem is derived from a later legend, which states that she cut her eyes out and sent them to a young nobleman who was importuning her with his addresses, and who complained that her eyes haunted him night and day and left him no peace. The third is a burning lamp, which she carries in her hand; this emblem is generally supposed to allude to her name, which in Greek (λύχη) signifies light. Some are of opinion that the second emblem (the eyes) alludes likewise to her name. The lamp was probably given to her because she was so bright and burning a light in Christ during a dark and pagan time.

St. Stephen, *Deacon and Proto-martyr.*—The emblem of St. Stephen is a stone, which he carries in his hand; but sometimes he is represented with several stones placed about his body, as if in the act of striking him. He was martyred by being stoned to death as is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. He also carries in his hand a book, which represents the Old Testament.

CHAPTER VIII.

Miscellaneous Symbols and Emblems.

IN this, our concluding chapter, we intend to treat of those Symbols and Emblems which are, according to the purpose and scale of this little work, not of sufficient importance to demand lengthy descriptions or to have separate chapters devoted to their consideration.

Colours.

IT is a fact, now undisputed, that the early Christian artists used colours symbolically, and that they applied them in their works as symbols more than as mere decora-

tive mediums, and grouped them with reference to their symbolic values, and not with regard to artistic effect only.

Rules were acknowledged for the application of colours to symbols, emblems, and sacred subjects and personages, during the early and middle ages;* but in late art we find the old rules thrown aside, with all those time-honoured principles and traditions which gave to early art (and still give to its remains) its great value and interest.

We give below the significations of the principal colours and those usually found in Christian art.

WHITE, the first and most joyous of the canonical colours, used by the Church during Easter, Christmas, and on the Circumcision and Epiphany of our Blessed Lord; on the Feasts of the Blessed Virgin, and on the Feasts of the Saints who were not martyrs. White is the emblem of purity, innocence, virginity, faith, joy, life, and light. The Angels and Saints in Heaven are represented as clad in robes of white. In art the Virgin Mary wears white at her Assumption. White may properly be represented by silver.

RED, one of the canonical colours used by the Church on the Exaltation of the Cross, the Invention of the Cross,

* See "Guide de la Peinture Grecque," DIDRON.

Pentecost, the Feasts of the Martyrs, &c. It is emblematical of the Passion of our Lord, and the sufferings and the martyrdoms of His Saints. It signifies divine love, power, and royal dignity, and also blood, war, and suffering.

BLUE is emblematical of Heaven. It signifies piety, sincerity, godliness, and divine contemplation. Blue is not used by the Church for draperies or vestments, not being one of the five colours now considered canonical. It has been much used for the decoration of ceilings, being symbolical of the sky or heaven, where, to further support the idea, it is generally studded with stars of gold.

YELLOW (pure), or gold, signifies brightness, the goodness of God, faith, and fruitfulness. Dingy yellow, on the contrary, is symbolical of faithlessness, deceit, and jealousy. In art Judas is generally habited in garments of a dirty yellow colour, in allusion to his crime.

GREEN, one of the canonical colours, is used by the Church on common Sundays and Ferias, or ordinary week days. It signifies bountifulness, hope, mirth, youth, and prosperity.

VIOLET, one of the canonical colours used by the Church on Septuagesima, Quinquagesima, Ash-Wednesday, and during Lent, Holy Week, and Advent, except on the

Feast days which occur in those seasons, &c. Violet signifies passion, suffering, sorrow, humility, deep love, and truth. In art the martyrs are frequently clad in violet or purple garments.

BLACK, one of the canonical colours, is used by the Church on Good Friday only. It is symbolical of death, darkness, despair, sorrow, mourning, and humiliation.

Precious Stones.

HAVING spoken of the significations of colours, we now turn our attention to the precious stones which we likewise find were used as symbols by the early Christian artists. This is proved by ancient writings; for instance, those of Marbodus, Bishop of Rennes, who wrote during the opening years of the twelfth century.

The Rev. J. M. Neale, in his "Mediæval Hymns and Sequences," gives a beautiful translation of a "Prose" by Marbodus, and also selections from his commentary.*

* See *Cives Coelestis Patriae*, in "Mediæval Hymns and Sequences," p. 57.

We shall take the liberty of transcribing here a few of the verses of the poem and a few passages from the notes attending it.

DIAMOND, the most beautiful, brilliant, and precious of all stones, signifies light, innocence, purity, life, and joy. The diamond, not being one of the twelve foundation stones mentioned in the Apocalypse,* is not spoken of by Marbodus.

RUBY, a stone of a bright red colour and of great value, signifies divine power and love, dignity and royalty. It is not mentioned by Marbodus.

CARBUNCLE, a stone of a deep red or blood-colour, signifies blood and suffering. It is symbolical of our Lord's Passion and of Martyrdom. Five carbuncles placed on the Cross symbolize the five wounds received by Christ.

SARDIUS, a stone of a purple-red colour, according to Marbodus, "signifies the Martyrs, who pour forth their blood for Christ."

> "The SARDIUS, with its purple red
> Sets forth their merits who *have* bled:
> The Martyr band, now blest above,
> That agonized for JESU's Love."

* Chap. xxi. 19, 20.

SAPPHIRE, a beautiful blue-coloured stone, signifies heaven, virtue, truth, constancy, heavenly love, and contemplation.

> "The azure light of SAPPHIRE stone
> Resembles that Celestial Throne:
> A symbol of each simple heart
> That grasps in hope the better part:
> Whose life each holy deed combines,
> And in the light of virtue shines."

In his commentary Marbodus says, "The Sapphire is of the colour of the sky. It signifies them that, while they be yet on earth, set their affections on things above, and despise things terrestrial."

TOPAZ, a stone of a yellow colour, signifies the goodness of God, love towards God, fruitfulness, and faithfulness. Marbodus says, "It signifies those who love God and their neighbour."

EMERALD, a stone of a brilliant green colour, signifies hope in immortality, exalted faith, and victory over trial and sin.

> "The EMERALD burns, intensely bright,
> With radiance of an olive light:
> This is the faith that highest shines,
> No deed of charity declines,
> And seeks no rest, and shuns no strife,
> In working out a holy life."

AMETHYST, a stone of a violet or purple colour, signifies earthly sufferings, sorrow, deep love, and truth unto death.

> "Last in the Holy City set
> With hue of glorious violet,
> Forth from the AMETHYST are rolled
> Sparks crimson-bright, and flames of gold:
> The humble heart it signifies
> That with its dying Master dies."

PEARL signifies purity, innocence, humility, and a retiring spirit. All stones of the grey colour of the pearl have the significations which are given to this beautiful gem.

The precious stones of lower rank, and the richly-coloured marbles, &c., which may be adopted as decorative mediums in nearly all branches of Ecclesiastical art, can be used symbolically, having the same significations as the colours they present.

Miscellaneous Symbols and Emblems.

The following Symbols and Emblems are frequently found in Christian art; and although they are not so important as those spoken of in the previous chapters, we cannot draw our little treatise to a close without briefly describing them.

ANCHOR.—The Anchor was used in Christian art at a very early period, being frequently found in the catacombs. It is the symbol of steadfast hope, firmness, tranquillity, and patience.

APE.—The Ape, in Christian art, is the emblem of sin, malice, cunning, and lust. Satan is sometimes represented under the form of an ape.

APPLE.—The Apple is generally used in allusion to the Fall of Man, or as the emblem of original sin.

ARROWS.—Arrows, when not used as emblems of martyrdom, are symbolic of suffering and pain.*

ASPERGE.—The Asperge, or instrument used for sprinkling holy water, is the emblem of purity of life and holiness.

BANNER.—The Banner, in Christian art, is the emblem or sign of triumph over persecution and death.

* See St. Augustine, p. 127, *ante.*

It is variously ornamented, but most properly with the cross.

BOOK.—An open Book is the symbol of perfect knowledge, or divine intelligence. A closed roll (*volumen*) signifies partial or imperfect knowledge.

A book in the hands of an evangelist or an apostle, represents the Gospel; but in the hands of an ordinary saint, it is a symbol or emblem signifying that he was famous for his writings, or as a teacher of the truths of the Gospel. The book in the hands of St. Stephen represents the Old Testament, out of which he confuted the doctors in the synagogue.

CIRCLE.—The Circle, or Ring, has been universally accepted as the emblem of eternity and perfect never-ending existence. It sometimes appears in art quite plain, and sometimes in the form of a serpent having its tail in its mouth.

CROWN.—A Crown, in Christian art, is the symbol of sovereignty, victory, and of the glory of martyrdom. As the symbol of sovereignty, it is given to the Deity, and to the Blessed Virgin as the Queen of Heaven. As the symbol of victory and the glory of martyrdom, it is given to saints and martyrs. In addition, it in some cases alludes to earthly rank. The crowns worn by

St. Catherine and St. Ursula allude both to their martyrdoms and their rank as princesses. Sometimes the crown is given to saints as an attribute alluding to their earthly rank only.

DOVE.—The Dove, when invested with the divine nimbus, is the symbol of the Holy Ghost; without the nimbus, it is the emblem of love, innocence, meekness, and purity. When depicted with an olive-branch in its beak, it is the emblem of peace. In art, the dove has been adopted to represent the human soul, and in that sense was depicted issuing from the lips of dying saints.

DRAGON.—In all periods of Christian art the Dragon has been adopted as the symbol of the Evil Spirit. It was evidently derived from the Apocalypse, where Satan is spoken of as the "Great Dragon." In representations of the archangel Michael, and of St. Margaret, the dragon is introduced as the symbol of the Evil Spirit. The Devil has also been symbolized by the Serpent, and with the direct authority of the Holy Scriptures.

DRAGON'S MOUTH. — Artists, having before their minds the scriptural words, "the jaws of Hell," adopted the open mouth of a dragon, or some similar monster, to set forth that fearful place which claims the fallen soul. When this symbol is depicted in ancient art,

flames are usually shown issuing from the jaws, into which sinners are falling, or being thrown by demons.

ESCALOP-SHELL.—The Escalop-shell, when used in Christian art, signifies pilgrimage. It is the usual emblem of pilgrims.

HEART.—A Heart carried by a saint is symbolical of love and piety. If depicted flaming, it is the emblem of fervent zeal for Christ; and if pierced with arrows, it is the emblem of contrition, deep repentance, and devotion in trial.

LAMP.—The Lamp, burning, is the symbol of wisdom, and that piety which is a burning light before all men.

LILY.—The Lily is the emblem of virginity and purity, and as such is borne by virgin saints.

OLIVE.—The Olive-branch is the emblem of reconciliation and peace.

PALM.—The Palm, in Christian art, is the symbol of martyrdom. It is found on the tombs of the early martyrs, and belongs to all those saints who suffered death in the cause of Christ.

POMEGRANATE.—The Pomegranate, burst open and displaying its seeds, was accepted by early artists as the emblem of the future life, and of hope in immortality.

SCOURGE.—The Scourge, or Flagellum, in the hands of a saint, is the emblem of self-mortification and penance. In the hands of St. Ambrose, however, it has a different meaning.*

SQUARE.—The Square, in opposition to the Circle, is the emblem of the earth and earthly existence. In this sense it was used for the nimbus of living persons.

SWAN.—The Swan is the emblem of solitude and retirement, and appears in mediæval art used with this signification.

SWORD.—The Sword, in a general sense, is the symbol of violent death or martyrdom. It is also the emblem of the soldier of Christ, who wields the "Sword of the Spirit."

* See St. Ambrose, p. 124, *ante*.

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